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"PHELIM—BEHAVE, I SAY—NOW STOP WID YOU—WELL—WELL, BUT YOU'RE THE TAZIN' PHELIM!"
—*Phelim O'Toole's Courtship*, p. 1058, *T. and S. of the I. P.*

COLLIER'S UNABRIDGED EDITION.

THE WORKS

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THE DEAD POXER. [illegible]

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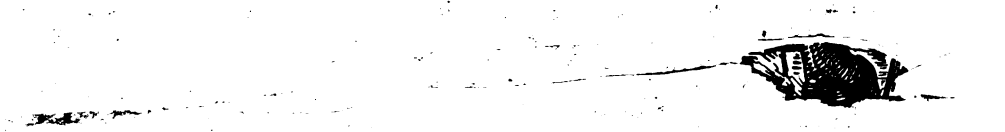

COLLIER'S UNABRIDGED EDITION.

THE WORKS

OF

WILLIAM CARLETON.

VOLUME II.

JANE SINCLAIR.

LHA DHU;
OR, THE DARK DAY.

THE DEAD BOXER.

ELLEN DUNCAN.

THE PROCTOR'S DAUGHTER.

VATENTINE McCLUTCHY,
THE IRISH AGENT.

THE TITHE PROCTOR.

THE EMIGRANTS OF AHADARRA.

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JANE SINCLAIR;

OR, THE FAWN OF SPRINGVALE.

If there be one object in life that stirs the current of human feeling more sadly than another, it is a young and lovely woman, whose intellect has been blighted by the treachery of him on whose heart, as on a shrine, she offered up the incense of her first affection. Such a being not only draws around her our tenderest and most delicate sympathies, but fills us with that mournful impression of early desolation, resembling so much the spirit of melancholy romance that arises from one of those sad and gloomy breezes which sweep unexpectedly over the sleeping surface of a summer lake, or moans with a tone of wail and sorrow through the green foliage of the wood under whose cooling shade we sink into our noon-day dream. Madness is at all times a thing of fearful mystery, but when it puts itself forth in a female gifted with youth and beauty, the pathos it causes becomes too refined for the grossness of ordinary sorrow—almost transcends our notion of the real, and assumes that wild interest which invests it with the dim and visionary light of the ideal. Such a malady constitutes the very romance of affliction, and gives to the fair sufferer rather the appearance of an angel fallen without guilt, than that of a being moulded for mortal purposes. Who ever could look upon such a beautiful ruin without feeling the heart sink, and the mind overshadowed with a solemn darkness, as if conscious of witnessing the still and awful gloom of that disastrous eclipse of reason, which, alas! is so often doomed never to pass away.

It is difficult to account for the mingled reverence, and terror, and pity with which we look upon the insane, and it is equally strange that in this case we approach the temple of the mind with deeper homage, when we know that the divinity has passed out of it. It must be from a conviction of this that uncivilized nations venerate deranged persons as inspired, and in some instance go so far, I believe, as even to pay them divine worship.

The principle, however, is in our nature: that for which our sympathy is deep and unbroken never fails to secure our compassion and respect, and ultimately to excite a still higher class of our moral feelings.

These preliminary observations were suggested to me by the fate of the beautiful but unfortunate girl, the melancholy events of whose life I am about to communicate. I feel, indeed, that in relating them, I undertake a task that would require a pen of unexampled power and delicacy. But it is probable that if I remained silent upon a history at once so true, and so full of sorrow, no other person equally intimate with its incidents will ever give them to the world. I cannot presume to detail unhappy Jane's calamity with the pathos due to a woe so singularly deep and delicate, or to describe that faithful attachment which gave her once laughing and ruby lips the white smile of a maniac's misery. This I cannot do; for who, alas, could ever hope to invest a dispensation so dark as her's with that rich tone of poetic beauty which threw its wild graces about her madness? For my part, I consider the subject not only as difficult, but sacred, and approach it on both accounts with devotion, and fear, and trembling. I need scarcely inform the reader that the names and localities are, for obvious reasons, fictitious, but I may be permitted to add that the incidents are substantially correct and authentic.

Jane Sinclair was the third and youngest daughter of a dissenting clergyman, in one of the most interesting counties in the north of Ireland. Her father was remarkable for that cheerful simplicity of character which is so frequently joined to a high order of intellect and an affectionate warmth of heart. To a well-tempered zeal in the cause of faith and morals, he added a practical habit of charity, both in word and deed, such as endeared him to all classes, but especially to those whose humble condition in life gave them the strongest claim upon his virtues, both as a man and a pastor. Difficult, indeed, would it be to find a minister of the gospel, whose practice and precept corresponded with such

beautiful fitness, nor one who, in the midst of his own domestic circle, threw such calm lustre around him as a husband and a father. A temper grave but sweet, wit playful and innocent, and tenderness that kept his spirit benignant to error without any compromise of duty, were the links which bound all hearts to him. Seldom have I known a Christian clergyman who exhibited in his own life so much of the unaffected character of apostolic holiness, nor one of whom it might be said with so much truth, that "he walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless."

His family, which consisted of his wife, one son, and three daughters, had, as might be expected, imbibed a deep sense of that religion, the serene beauty of which shone so steadily along their father's path of life. Mrs. Sinclair had been well educated, and in her husband's conversation and society found further opportunity of improving, not only her intellect, but her heart. Though respectably descended, she could not claim relationship with what may be emphatically termed the *gentry* of the country; but she could with that class so prevalent in the north of Ireland, which ranks in birth only one grade beneath them. I say in birth;—for in all the decencies of life, in the unostentatious bounties of benevolence, in moral purity, domestic harmony, and a conscientious observance of religion, both in the comeliness of its forms, and the cheerful freedom of its spirit, this class ranks immeasurably above every other which Irish society presents. They who compose it are not sufficiently wealthy to relax those pursuits of honorable industry which constitute them, as a people, the ornament of our nation; nor does their good sense and decent pride permit them to follow the dictates of a mean ambition, by struggling to reach that false elevation, which is as much beneath them in all the virtues that grace life, as it is above them in the dazzling dissipation which renders the violation or neglect of its best duties a matter of fashionable etiquette, or the shameful privilege of high birth. To this respectable and independent class did the immediate relations of Mrs. Sinclair belong; and, as might be expected, she failed not to bring all its virtues to her husband's heart and household —there to soothe him by their influence, to draw fresh energy from their mutual intercourse, and to shape the habits of their family into that perception of self-respect and decent propriety, which in domestic duty, dress, and general conduct, uniformly results from a fine sense of moral feeling, blended with high religious principle.

This, indeed, is the class whose example has diffused that spirit of keen intelligence and enterprise throughout the north which makes the name of an Ulster manufacturer or merchant a synonyme for integrity and honor. From it is derived the creditable love of independence which operates upon the manners of the people and the physical soil of the country so obviously, that the *natural* appearance of the one may be considered as an appropriate exponent of the *moral* condition of the other. Aided by the genius of a practical and impressive creed, whose simple grandeur gives elevation and dignity to its followers;—this class it is which, by affording employment, counsel, and example to many of the lower classes, brings peace and comfort to those who inhabit the white cottages and warm farmsteads of the north, and lights up its cultivated landscapes, its broad champaigns, and peaceful vales, into an aspect so smiling, that even the very soil seems to proclaim and partake of the happiness of its inhabitants. Indeed, few spots in the north could afford the spectator a better opportunity of verifying our observations as to the mild beauty of the country, than the residence of the amiable clergyman whose unhappy child's fate has furnished us with the affecting circumstances we are about to lay before the reader.

Springvale House, Mr. Sinclair's residence, was situated on an eminence that commanded a full view of the sloping valley from which it had its name. Along this vale, winding towards the house in a northern direction, ran a beautiful tributary stream, accompanied for nearly two miles in its progress by a small but well conducted road, which indeed had rather the character of a green lane than a public way, being but very little of a thoroughfare. Nothing could surpass this delightful vale in the soft and serene character of its scenery. Its sides, partially wooded, and cultivated with surpassing taste, were not so precipitous as to render habitation in its bosom inconvenient. They sloped up gradually and gracefully on each side, presenting to the eye a number of snow-white residences, each standing upon the brow of some white table or undulation, and surrounded by grounds sufficiently spacious to allow of green lawns, ornamented plantations, and gardens, together with a due proportion of land for cultivation and pasture. From Mr. Sinclair's house the silver bends of this fine stream gave exquisite peeps to the spectator as they wound out of the wood which here and there clothed its banks, occasionally dipping into the water. On the left, attached to the glebe-house of the Protestant pastor of the parish, the eye rested

upon a pond as smooth as a mirror, except where an occasional swan, as it floated onwards without any apparent effort, left here and there a slight quivering ripple behind it. Farther down, springing from between two clumps of trees, might be seen the span of a light and elegant arch, from under which the river gently wound away to the right; and beyond this, on the left, about a hundred yards from the bank, rose up the slender spire of the parish church, out of the bosom of the old beeches that overshadowed it, and threw a solemn gloom upon the peaceful graveyard at its side. About two hundred yards again to the right, in a little green shelving dell beneath the house, stood Mr. Sinclair's modest white meeting-house, with a large ash tree hanging over each gable, and a row of poplars behind it. The valley at the opposite extremity opened upon a landscape bright and picturesque, dotted with those white residences which give that peculiar character of warmth and comfort for which the northern landscapes are so remarkable. Indeed the eye could scarcely rest upon a richer expanse of country than lay stretched out before it, nor can we omit to notice the singularly unique and beautiful effect produced by the numerous bleach-greens that shone at various degrees of distance, and contrasted so sweetly with the surface of a land deeply and delightfully verdant.

In the far distance rose the sharp outlines of a lofty mountain, whose green and sloping base melted into the "sun-silvered" expanse of the sea, on the smooth bosom of which the eye could snatch brilliant glimpses of the snow-white sails that sparkled at a distance as they fell under the beams of the noonday sun. The landscape was indeed beautiful in itself, but still rendered more so by the delicate aërial tints which lay on every object, and touched the whole into a mellower and more exquisite expression.

Such was the happy valley in which this peaceful family resided; each and all enjoying that tranquility which sheds its calm contentment over the unassuming spirits of those who are ignorant of the crimes that flow from the selfishness and ambition of busy life. To them, the fresh breezes of morning, as they rustled through the living foliage, and stirred the modest flowers of their pleasant path, were fraught with an enjoyment which bound their hearts to every object around them, because to each of them these objects were the sources of habitual gratification. On them the dewy stillness of evening descended with tender serenity, as the valley shone in the radiance of the sinking sun; and by them was held that sweet and rapturous communion with nature, which, as it springs earliest in the affections so does it linger about the heart when all the other loves and enmities of life are forgotten. Who is there, indeed, whose spirit does not tremble with tenderness, on looking back upon the scenes of his early life? And, alas! alas! how few are there of those that are long conversant with the world, who can take such a retrospect without feeling their hearts weighed down by sorrow, and the force of associations too mournful to be uttered in words. The bitter consciousness that we can be youthful no more, and that the golden hours of our innocence have passed away for ever, throws a melancholy darkness over the soul, and sends it back again to retrace, in the imaginary light of our early time, the scenes where that innocence had been our playmate. Let no man deny that groves, and meadows, and green fields, and winding streams, and all the other charms of rural imagery, unconsciously but surely give to the human heart a deep perception of that graceful creed which is beautifully termed the religion of nature. They give purity and strength to feeling, and through the imagination, which owes so much of its power to their impressions, they raise our sentiments until we feel them kindled into union with the lustre of a holier light than even that which leads our steps to God through the beauty of his own works. For this reason it is, that all imaginative affections are much stronger in the country than in the town. Love in the one place is not only freer from the coarseness of passion, but incomparably more seductive to the heart, and more voluptuous in its conception of the ideal beauty with which it invests the object of its attachment. Nor is this surprising. In the country its various associations are essentially impressive and poetical. Moonlight — evening — the still glen — the river side—the flowery hawthorn—the bower —the crystal well—not forgetting the melody of the woodland songster—are all calculated to make the heart and fancy surrender themselves to the blandishments of a passion that is surrounded by objects so sweetly linked to their earliest sympathies. But this is not all. In rural life, neither the heart nor the eye is distracted by the claims of rival beauty, when challenging, in the various graces of many, that admiration which might be bestowed on one alone, did not each successive impression efface that which went before it. In the country, therefore, in spring meadows, among summer groves, and beneath autumnal skies, most certainly does the passion of love sink deepest into the human heart, and pass into the greatest extremes of happiness or

pain. Here is where it may be seen, cheek to cheek, now in all the shivering ecstacies of intense rapture, or again moping carelessly along, with pale brow and flashing eye, sometimes writhing in the agony of undying attachment, or chanting its mad lay of hope and love in a spirit of fearful happiness more affecting than either misery or despair.

Everything was beautiful in the history of unhappy Jane Sinclair's melancholy fate. The evening of the incident to which the fair girl's misery might eventually be traced was one of the most calm and balmy that could be witnessed even during the leafy month of June. With the exception of Mrs. Sinclair, the whole family had gone out to saunter leisurely by the river side; the father between his two eldest daughters, and Jane, then sixteen, sometimes chatting to her brother William, and sometimes fondling a white dove, which she had petted and trained with such success that it was then amenable to almost every light injunction she laid upon it. It sat upon her shoulder, which, indeed, was its usual seat, would peck her cheek, cower as if with a sense of happiness in her bosom, and put its bill to her lips, from which it was usually fed, either to demand some sweet reward for its obedience, or to express its attachment by a profusion of innocent caresses. The evening, as we said, was fine; not a cloud could be seen, except a pile of feathery flakes that hung far up at the western gate of heaven; the stillness was profound; no breathing even of the gentlest zephyr, could be felt; the river beside them, which was here pretty deep, seemed motionless; not a leaf of the trees stirred; the very aspens were still as if they had been marble; and the whole air was warm and fragrant. Although the sun wanted an hour of setting, yet from the bottom of the vale they could perceive the broad shafts of light which shot from his mild disk through the snowy clouds we have mentioned, like bars of lambent radiance, almost palpable to the touch. Yet, although this delightful silence was so profound, the heart could perceive, beneath its stillest depths, that voiceless harmony of progressing life, which, like the music of a dream, can reach the soul independently of the senses, and pour upon it a sublime sense of natural inspiration.

Something like this appears to have been felt by the group we have alluded to. Mr. Sinclair, after standing for a moment on the bank of the river, and raising his eyes to the solemn splendor of the declining sun, looked earnestly around him, and then out upon the glowing landscape that stretched beyond the valley, after which, with a spirit of high enthusiasm, he exclaimed, catching at the same time the fire and grandeur of the poet's noble conception—

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!
Almighty! thine this universal fame—
Thus wondrous fair—thyself how wondrous then—
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works.

There was something singularly impressive in the burst of piety which the hour and the place drew from this venerable pastor, as indeed there was in the whole group, as they listened in the attitude of deep attention to his words. Mr. Sinclair was a tall, fine-looking old man, whose white flowing locks fell down on each side of his neck. His figure appeared to fine advantage, as, standing a little in front of his children, he pointed with his raised arm to the setting sun; behind him stood his two eldest girls, the countenance of one turned with an expression of awe and admiration towards the west; that of the other fixed with mingled reverence and affection on her father. William stood near Jane, and looked out thoughtfully towards the sea, while Jane herself, light, and young, and beautiful, stood with a hushed face, in the act of giving a pat of gentle rebuke to the snow-white dove on her bosom. At length they resumed their walk, and the conversation took a lighter turn. The girls left their father's side, and strolled in many directions through the meadow. Sometimes they pulled wild flowers, if marked by more than ordinary beauty, or gathered the wild mint and meadow-sweet to perfume their dairy, or culled the flowery woodbine to shed its delicate fragrance through their sleeping-rooms. In fact, all their habits and amusements were pastoral, and simple, and elegant. Jane accompanied them as they strolled about, but was principally engaged with her pet, which flew, in capricious but graceful circles over her head, and occasionally shot off into the air, sweeping in mimic flight behind a green knoll, or a clump of trees, completely out of her sight; after which it would again return, and folding its snowy pinions, drop affectionately upon her shoulder, or into her bosom. In this manner they proceeded for some time, when the dove again sped off across the river, the bank of which was wooded on the other side. Jane followed the beautiful creature with a sparkling eye, and saw it wheeling to return, when immediately the report of a gun was heard from the trees directly beneath it, and the next moment it faltered in its flight, sunk, and with feeble wing, struggled to reach the object of its affection. This, however, was beyond its strength. After sinking gradual-

HAVING GAINED THE BANK, HE APPROACHED THEM, BUT WAS MET HALF WAY BY JANE, WHOSE EYES, NOW SPARKLING THROUGH HER TEARS, SPOKE HER GRATITUDE IN LANGUAGE MUCH MORE ELOQUENT THAN ANY HER TONGUE COULD UTTER.—*Jane Sinclair*, Part First, p. 5.

ly towards the earth, it had power only to reach the middle of the river, into the deepest part of which it fell, and there lay fluttering upon the stream.

The report of the gun, and the fate of the pigeon, brought the personages of our little drama with hurrying steps to the edge of the river. One scream of surprise and distress proceeded from the lips of its fair young mistress, after which she wrung her hands, and wept and sobbed like one in absolute despair.

"Oh, dear William," she exclaimed, "can you not rescue it? Oh, save it—save it; if it sinks I will never see it more. Oh, papa, who could be so cruel, so heartless, as to injure a creature so beautiful and inoffensive?"

"I know not, my dear Jane; but cruel and heartless must the man be that could perpetrate a piece of such wanton mischief. I should rather think it is some idle boy who knows not that it is tame."

"William, dear William, can you not save it," she inquired again of her brother; "if it is doomed to die, let it die with *me;* but, alas! now it must sink, and I will never see it more;" and the affectionate girl continued to weep bitterly.

"Indeed, my dear Jane, I never regretted my ignorance of swimming so much as I do this moment. The truth is, I cannot swim a stroke, otherwise I would save poor little Ariel for your sake."

"Don't take it so much to heart, my dear child," said her father; "it is certainly a distressing incident, but, at the same time, your grief, girl, is too excessive; it is violent, and you know it ought *not* to be violent for the death of a favorite bird."

"Oh, papa, who can look upon its struggles for life, and not feel deeply; remember it was mine, and think of its attachment to me. It has not only the pain of its wound to suffer, but to struggle with an element against which it feels a natural antipathy, and with which the gentle creature is this moment contending for its life."

There was, indeed, something very painful and affecting in the situation of the beautiful wounded dove. Even Mr. Sinclair himself, in witnessing its unavailing struggles, felt as much; nor were the other two girls unaffected any more than Jane herself. Their eyes became filled with tears, and Maria, the eldest, said, "It is better, Jane, to return home. Poor mute creature! the view of its sufferings is, indeed, very painful."

Just then a tall, slender youth, apparently about eighteen, came out of the trees on the other bank of the river, but on seeing Mr. Sinclair and his family, he paused, and appeared to feel somewhat embarrassed. It was evident that he had seen the bird wounded, and followed the course of its flight, without suspecting that it was tame, or that there was any person near to claim it. The distress of the females, however, especially of its mistress, immediately satisfied him that it was theirs, and he was about to withdraw into the wood again, when the situation of poor Ariel caught his eye. He instantly took off his hat, flung it across the river, and plunging in swam towards the dove, which was now nearly exhausted. A few strokes brought him to the spot, on reaching which, he caught the bird in one hand, held it above the water, and, with the other, swam down towards a slope in the bank a few yards below the spot where the party stood. Having gained the bank, he approached them, but was met half way by Jane, whose eyes, now sparkling through her tears, spoke her gratitude in language much more eloquent than any her tongue could utter.

The youth first examined the bird, with a view to ascertain where it had been wounded, and immediately placed it with much gentleness in the eager hands of its mistress.

"It will not die, I should think, in consequence of the wound," he observed, "which, though pretty severe, has left the wing unbroken. The body, at all events, is safe. With care it may recover."

William then handed him his hat and Mr. Sinclair having thanked him for an act of such humanity, insisted that he should go home with them, in order to procure a change of apparel. At first he declined this offer, but, after a little persuasion, he yielded with something of shyness and hesitation: accordingly, without loss of time, they all reached the house together.

Having, with some difficulty, been prevailed on to take a glass of cordial, he immediately withdrew to William's apartment, for the purpose of changing his dress. William, however, now observed that he got pale, and that in a few minutes afterwards his teeth began to chatter, whilst he shivered excessively.

"You had better lose no time in putting these dry clothes on," said he; "I am rather inclined to think bathing does not agree with you, that is, if I am to judge by your present paleness and trembling."

"No," said the youth, "it is a pleasure which, for the last two years, I have been forbidden. I feel very chilly, indeed, and you will excuse me for declining the use of your clothes. I must return home forthwith."

Young Sinclair, however, would not hear of this. After considerable pains he prevailed on him to change his dress, but no argument

could induce him to stop a moment longer than until this was effected.

The family, on his entering the drawing-room to take his leave, were surprised at a determination so sudden and unexpected, but when Mr. Sinclair noticed his extreme paleness, he suspected that he had got ill, and that it might not be delicate to press him.

"Before you leave us," said the good clergyman, "will you not permit us to know the name of the young gentleman to whom my daughter is indebted for the rescue of her dove?"

"We are as yet but strangers in the neighborhood," replied the youth: "my father's name is Osborne. We have not been more than three days in Mr. Williams's residence, which, together with the whole of the property annexed to it, my father has purchased."

"I am aware, I am aware: then you will be a permanent neighbor of ours," said Mr. Sinclair; "and believe me, my dear boy, we shall always be happy to see you at Springvale; nor shall we soon forget the generous act which first brought us acquainted."

Whilst this short dialogue lasted, two or three shy sidelong glances passed between him and Jane. So extremely modest was the young man that, from an apprehension lest these glances might have been noticed, his pale face became lit up with a faint blush, in which state of confusion he took his leave.

Conversation was not resumed among the Sinclairs for some minutes after his departure, each, in fact, having been engaged in reflecting upon the surpassing beauty of his face, and the uncommon symmetry of his slender but elegant person. Their impression, indeed, was rather that of wonder than of mere admiration. The tall youth who had just left them seemed, in fact, an incarnation of the beautiful itself—a visionary creation, in which was embodied the ideal spirit of youth, intellect, and grace. His face shone with that rosy light of life's prime which only glows on the human countenance during the brief period that intervenes between the years of the thoughtless boy and those of the confirmed man: and whilst his white brow beamed with intellect, it was easy to perceive that the fire of deep feeling and high-wrought enthusiasm broke out in timid flashes from his dark eye. His modesty, too, by tempering the full lustre of his beauty, gave to it a character of that graceful diffidence, which above all others makes the deepest impression upon a female heart.

"Well, I do think," said William Sinclair, "that young Osborne is decidedly the finest boy I ever saw—the most perfect in beauty and figure—and yet we have not seen him to advantage."

"I think, although I regretted to see him so, that he looked better after he got pale," said Maria; "his features, though colorless, were cut like marble."

"I hope his health may not be injured by what has occurred," observed the second; "he appeared ill."

"That, Agnes, is more to the point," said Mr. Sinclair; "I fear the boy is by no means well; and I am apprehensive, from the deep carnation of his cheek, and his subsequent paleness, that he carries within him the seeds of early dissolution. He is too delicate, almost too etherial for earth."

"If he becomes an angel," said William, smiling, "with a very slight change, he will put some of them out of countenance."

"William," said the father, "never, while you live attempt to be witty at the expense of what is sacred or solemn; such jests harden the heart of him who utters them, and sink his character, not only as a Christian, but as a gentleman."

"I beg your pardon, father—I was wrong—but I spoke heedlessly."

"I know you did, Billy; but in future avoid it. Well, Jane, how is your bird?"

"I think it is better, papa; but one can form no opinion so soon."

"Go, show it to your mamma—she is the best doctor among us—follow her advice, and no doubt she will add its cure to the other triumphs of her skill."

"Jane is fretting too much about it," observed Agnes; "why, Jane, you are just now as pale as young Osborne himself."

This observation turned the eyes of the family upon her; but scarcely had her sister uttered the words when the young creature's countenance became the color of crimson, so deeply, and with such evident confusion did she blush. Indeed she felt conscious of this, for she rose, with the wounded dove lying gently between her hands and bosom, and passed, without speaking, out of the room.

"Don't you think, papa," observed Miss Sinclair, "that there is a striking resemblance between young Osborne and Jane? I could not help remarking it."

"There decidedly is, Maria, now that you mentioned it," said William.

The father paused a little, as if to consider the matter, and then added with a smile—

"It is very singular, Mary; but indeed I think there is—both in the style of their features and their figure."

"Osborne is too handsome for a man," observed Agnes; "yet, after all, one can hardly say so, his face, though fine, is not feminine."

"Beauty, my children!—alas, what is it?

Often—too often, a fearful, a fatal gift. It is born with us, and not of our own merit; yet we are vain enough to be proud of it. It is at best a flower that soon fades—a light that soon passes away. Oh! what is it when contrasted with those high principles whose beauty is immortal, which brighten by age, and know neither change nor decay. There is Jane—my poor child—she is indeed very beautiful and graceful, yet I often fear that her beauty, joined as it is to an over-wrought sensibility, may, before her life closes, occasion much sorrow either to herself or others."

"She is all affection," said William.

"She is all love, all tenderness, all goodness; and may the grace of her Almighty Father keep her from the wail and woe which too often accompany the path of beauty in this life of vicissitude and trial."

A tear of affection for his beautiful child stood in the old man's eyes as he raised them to heaven, and the loving hearts of his family burned with tenderness towards this their youngest and best beloved sister.

The sun had now gone down, and, after a short pause, the old man desired William to summon the other members of the household to prayers. The evening worship being concluded, the youngsters walked in the lawn before the door until darkness began to set in, after which they retired to their respective apartments for the night.

Sweet and light be your slumbers, O ye that are peaceful and good—sweet be your slumbers on this night so calm and beautiful; for, alas! there is one among you into whose innocent bosom has stolen that destroying spirit which will yet pale her fair cheek, and wring many a bitter tear from the eyes that love to look upon her. Her early sorrows have commenced this night, and for what mysterious purpose who can divine?—but, alas, alas, her fate is sealed—the fawn of Springvale is stricken, and even now carries in her young heart a wound that will never close.

Osborne's father, who had succeeded to an estate of one thousand per annum, was the eldest son of a gentleman whose habits were badly calculated to improve the remnant of property which ancestral extravagance had left him.

Ere many years the fragment which came into his possession dwindled into a fraction of its former value, and he found himself with a wife and four children—two sons and two daughters—struggling on a pittance of two hundred a year. This, to a man possessing the feelings and education of a gentleman, amounted to something like retributive justice upon his prodigality. His conflict with poverty, however, (for to him it might be termed such,) was fortunately not of long duration. A younger brother who, finding that he must fight his own battle in life, had embraced the profession of medicine, very seasonably died, and Osborne's father succeeded to a sum of twelve thousand pounds in the funds, and an income in landed property of seven hundred per annum. He now felt himself more independent than he had ever been, and with this advantage, that his bitter experience of a heartless world had completely cured him of all tendency to extravagance. And now he would have enjoyed as much happiness as is the usual lot of man, were it not that the shadow of death fell upon his house, and cast its cold blight upon his children. Ere three years had elapsed he saw his eldest daughter fade out of life, and in less than two more his eldest son was laid beside her in the same grave. Decline, the poetry of death, in its deadly beauty came upon them, and whilst it sang its song of life and hope to their hearts, treacherously withdrew them to darkness and the worm.

Osborne's feelings were those of thoughtlessness and extravagance; but he had never been either a libertine or a profligate, although the world forbore not, when it found him humbled in his poverty, to bring such charges against him. In truth, he was full of kindness, and no parent ever loved his children with deeper or more devoted affection. The death of his noble son and beautiful girl brought down his spirit to the most mournful depths of affliction. Still he had two left, and, as it happened, the most beautiful, and more than equally possessed his affections. To them was gradually transferred that melancholy love which the heart of the sorrowing father had carried into the grave of the departed; and alas, it appeared as if it had come back to those who lived loaded with the malady of the dead. The health of the surviving boy became delicate, and by the advice of his physician, who pronounced the air in which they lived unfavorable, — Osborne, on hearing that Mr. Williams, a distant relation, was about to dispose of his house and grounds, immediately became the purchaser. The situation, which had a southern aspect, was dry and healthy, the air pure and genial, and, according to the best medical opinions, highly beneficial to persons of a consumptive habit.

For two years before this—that is since his brother's death—the health of young Osborne had been watched with all the tender vigilance of affection. A regimen in diet, study and exercise, had been prescribed for him by his physician; the regulations of which he was by no means to transgress.

In fact his parents lived under a sleepless dread of losing him which kept their hearts expanded with that inexpressible and burning love which none but a parent so circumstanced can ever feel. Alas! notwithstanding the promise of life which early years usually hold out, there was much to justify them in this their sad and gloomy apprehension. Woeful was the uncertainty which they felt in discriminating between the natural bloom of youth and the beauty of that fatal malady which they dreaded. His tall slender frame, his transparent cheek, so touching, so unearthly in the fairness of its expression; the delicacy of his whole organization, both mental and physical—all, all, with the terror of decline in their hearts, spoke as much of despair as of hope, and placed the life and death of their beloved boy in an equal poise.

But, independently of his extraordinary personal advantages, all his dispositions were so gentle and affectionate, that it was not in human nature to entertain harsh feeling toward him. Although modest and shrinking, even to diffidence, he possessed a mind full of intellect and enthusiasm: his imagination, too, overflowed with creative power, and sought the dreamy solitudes of noon, that it might, far from the bustle of life, shadow forth those images of beauty which come thickly only upon those whose hearts are most susceptible of its forms. Many a time has he sat alone upon the brow of a rock or hill, watching the clouds of heaven, or gazing on the setting sun, or communing with the thousand aspects of nature in a thousand moods, his young spirit relaxed into that elysian reverie which, beyond all other kinds of intellectual enjoyment, is the most seductive to a youth of poetic temperament.

There were, indeed, in Osborne's case, too many of those light and scarcely perceptible tokens which might be traced, if not to a habit of decline, at least to a more than ordinary delicacy of constitution. The short cough, produced by the slightest damp, or the least breath of ungenial air—the varying cheek, now rich as purple, and again pale as a star of heaven—the unsteady pulse, and the nervous sense of uneasiness without a cause—all these might be symptoms of incipient decay, or proofs of those fine impulses which are generally associated with quick sensibility and genius. Still they existed; at one time oppressing the hearts of his parents with fear, and again exalting them with pride. The boy was consequently enjoined to avoid all violent exercise, to keep out of currents, while heated to drink nothing cold, and above all things never to indulge in the amusement of cold bathing.

Such were the circumstances under which Osborne first appeared to the reader, who may now understand the extent of his alarm on feeling himself so suddenly and seriously affected by his generosity in rescuing the wounded dove. His mere illness on this occasion was a matter of much less anxiety to himself than the alarm which he knew it would occasion his parents and sister. On his reaching home he mentioned the incident which occurred, admitted that he had been rather warm on going into the water, and immediately went to bed. Medical aid was forthwith procured, and although the physician assured them that there appeared nothing serious in his immediate state, yet was his father's house a house of wail and sorrow.

The next day the Sinclairs, having heard in reply to their inquiries through the servant who had been sent home with his apparel, that he was ill, the worthy clergyman lost no time in paying his parents a visit on the occasion. In this he expressed his regret, and that also of his whole family, that any circumstance relating to them should have been the means, even accidentally, of affecting the young gentleman's health. It was not, however, until he dwelt upon the occurrence in terms of approbation, and placed the boy's conduct in a generous light, that he was enabled to appreciate the depth and tenderness of their affection for him. The mother's tears flowed in silence on hearing this fresh proof of his amiable spirit, and the father, with a foreboding heart, related to Mr. Sinclair the substance of that which we have detailed to the reader.

Such was the incident which brought these two families acquainted, and ultimately ripened their intimacy into friendship.

Much sympathy was felt for young Osborne by the other members of Mr. Sinclair's household, especially as his modest and unobtrusive deportment, joined to his extraordinary beauty, had made so singularly favorable an impression upon them. Nor was the history of that insidious malady, which had already been so fatal to his sister and brother, calculated to lessen the interest which his first appearance had excited. There was one young heart among them which sank, as if the weight of death had come over it, on hearing this melancholy account of him whose image was now for ever the star of her fate, whether for happiness or sorrow. From the moment their eyes had met in those few shrinking but flashing glances by which the spirit of love conveys its own secret, she felt the first painful transports of the new affection, and retired to solitude with the arrow that struck her so deeply yet quivering in her bosom.

The case of our fair girl differed widely from that of many young persons, in whose heart the passion of love lurks unknown for a time, throwing its roseate shadows of delight and melancholy over their peace, whilst they themselves feel unable in the beginning to develop those strange sensations which take away from their pillows the unbroken slumber of early life.

Jane from the moment her eyes rested on Osborne felt and was conscious of feeling the influence of a youth so transcendently fascinating. *Her* love broke not forth gradually like the trembling light that brightens into the purple flush of morning; neither was it fated to sink calm and untroubled like the crimson tints that die only when the veil of night, like the darkness of death, wraps them in its shadow. Alas no, it sprung from her heart in all the noontide strength of maturity—a full-grown passion, incapable of self-restraint, and conscious only of the wild and novel delight arising from its own indulgence. Night and day that graceful form hovered before her, encircled in the halo of her young imagination, with a lustre that sparkled beyond the light of human beauty. We know that the eye when it looks steadily upon a cloudless sun, is incapable for some time afterwards of seeing any other object distinctly; and that in whatever direction it turns that bright image floats incessantly before it —nor will be removed even although the eye itself is closed against its radiance. So was it with Jane. Asleep or awake, in society or in solitude, the vision with which her soul held communion never for a moment withdrew from before her, until at length her very heart became sick, and her fancy entranced, by the excess of her youthful and unrestrained attachment. She could not despair, she could scarcely doubt; for on thinking of the blushing glances so rapidly stolen at herself, and of the dark brilliant eye from whence they came, she knew that the soul of him she loved spoke to her in a language that was mutually understood. These impressions, it is true, were felt in her moments of ecstacy, but then came, notwithstanding this confidence, other moments when maidenly timidity took the crown of rejoicing off her head, and darkened her youthful brow with that uncertainty, which, while it depresses hope, renders the object that is loved a thousand times dearer to the heart.

To others, at the present stage of her affection, she appeared more silent than usual, and evidently fond of solitude, a trait which they had not observed in her before. But these were slight symptoms of what she felt; for alas, the day was soon to come that was to overshadow their hearts for ever—when never, never more were they and she, in the light of their own innocence, to sing like the morning stars together, or to lay their untroubled heads in the slumbers of the happy.

More than a month had now elapsed since the first appearance of Osborne as one of the dramatis personæ of our narrative. A slight fever, attended with less effect upon the lungs than his parents anticipated, had passed off, and he was once more able to go abroad and take exercise in the open air. The two families were now in the habit of visiting each other almost daily; and what tended more and more to draw closer the bonds of good feeling between them, was the fact of the Osbornes being members of the same creed, and attendants at Mr. Sinclair's place of worship. Jane, while Charles Osborne was yet ill, had felt a childish diminution of her affection for her convalescent dove, whilst at the same time something whispered to her that it possessed a stronger interest in her heart than it had ever done before. This may seem a paradox to such of our readers as have never been in love; but it is not at all irreconcilable to the analogous and often conflicting states of feeling produced by that strange and mysterious passion. The innocent girl was wont, as frequently as she could without exciting notice, to steal away to the garden, or the fields, or the river side, accompanied by her mute companion, to which with pouting caresses she would address a series of rebukes of having been the means of occasioning the illness of him she loved.

"Alas, Ariel, little do you know, sweet bird, what anxiety you have caused your mistress—if *he* dies I shall never love you more? Yes, coo, and flutter—but I do not care for you; no, that kiss won't satisfy me until he is recovered—then I shall be friends with you, and you shall be my own Ariel again."

She would then pat it petulantly; and the beautiful creature would sink its head, and slightly expand its wings, as if conscious that there was a change of mood in her affection.

But again the innocent remorse of her girlish heart would flow forth in terms of tenderness and endearment; again would she pat and cherish it; and with the artless caprice of childhood exclaim—

"No, my own Ariel, the fault was not yours; come, I shall love you—and I will not be angry again; even if you were not good I would love you for *his* sake. You are now dearer to me a thousand times than you ever were; but alas! Ariel, I am sick, I am sick, and no longer happy. Where is my lightness of heart, my sweet bird, and where, oh where is the joy I used to feel?"

Even this admission, which in the midst of solitude could reach no other human ear, would startle the bashful creature into alarm; and whilst her cheek became alternately pale and crimson at such an avowal thus uttered aloud, she would wipe away the tears that arose to her eyes whenever the depths of her affection were stirred by those pensive broodings which gave its sweetest charm to youthful love.

In thus seeking solitude, it is not to be imagined that our young heroine was drawn thither by a love of contemplating nature in those fresher aspects which present themselves in the stillness of her remote recesses. She sought not for their own sakes the shades of the grove, the murmuring cascade, nor the voice of the hidden rivulet that occasionally stole out from its leafy cover, and ran in music towards the ampler stream of the valley.

No, no; over *her* heart and eye the spirit of their beauty passed idly and unfelt. All of external life that she had been wont to love and admire gave her pleasure no more. The natural arbors of woodbine, the fairy dells, and the wild flowers that peeped in unknown sweetness about the hedges, the fairy fingers, the blue-bells, the cow-slips, with many others of her fragrant and graceful favorites, all, all, charmed her, alas, no more. Nor at home, where every voice was tenderness, and every word affection, did there exist in her stricken heart that buoyant sense of enjoyment which had made her youth like the music of a brook, where every thing that broke the smoothness of its current only turned it into melody. The morning and evening prayer—the hymn of her sister voices—their simple spirit of tranquil devotion—and the touching solemnity of her father, worshipping God upon the altar of his own heart—all, all this, alas—alas, charmed her no more. Oh, no—no; many motives conspired to send her into solitude, that she might in the sanctity of unreproving nature cherish her affection for the youth whose image was ever, ever before her. At home such was the timid delicacy of her love, that she felt as if its indulgence even in the stillest depths of her own heart, was disturbed by the conversation of her kindred, and the familiar habits of domestic life. Her father's, her brother's, and her sisters' voices, produced in her a feeling of latent shame, which, when she supposed for a moment that they could guess her attachment, filled her with anxiety and confusion. She experienced besides a sense of uneasiness on reflecting that she practiced, for the first time in their presence, a dissimulation so much at variance with the opinion she knew they entertained of her habitual candor. It was, in fact, the first secret she had ever concealed from them; and now the suppression of it in her own bosom made her feel as if she had withdrawn that confidence which was due to the love they bore her. This was what kept her so much in her own room, or sent her abroad to avoid all that had a tendency to repress the indulgence of an attachment that had left in her heart a capacity for no other enjoyment. But in solitude she was far from every thing that could disturb those dreams in which the tranquility of nature never failed to entrance her. There was where the mysterious spirit that raises the soul above the impulses of animal life, mingled with her being, and poured upon her affection the elemental purity of that original love which in the beginning preceded human guilt.

It is, indeed, far from the contamination of society—in the stillness of solitude when the sentiment of love comes abroad before its passion, that the heart can be said to realize the object of its devotion, and to forget that its indulgence can ever be associated with error. This is, truly, the angelic love of youth and innocence; and such was the nature of that which the beautiful girl felt. Indeed, her clay was so divinely tempered, that the veil which covered her pure and ethereal spirit, almost permitted the light within to be visible, and exhibited the workings of a soul that struggled to reach the object whose communion with itself seemed to constitute the sole end of its existence.

The evening on which Jane and Charles Osborne met for the first time, unaccompanied by their friends, was one of those to which the power of neither pen nor pencil can do justice. The sun was slowly sinking among a pile of those soft crimson clouds, behind which fancy is so apt to picture to itself the regions of calm delight that are inhabited by the happy spirits of the blest; the sycamore and hawthorn were yet musical with the hum of bees, busy in securing their evening burthen for the hive. Myriads of winged insects were sporting in the sunbeams; the melancholy plaint of the ring-dove came out sweetly from the trees, mingled with the songs of other birds, and the still sweeter voice of some happy groups of children at play in the distance. The light of the hour, in its subdued but golden tone, fell with singular clearness upon all nature, giving to it that tranquil beauty which makes every thing the eye rests upon glide with quiet rapture into the heart. The moth butterflies were fluttering over the meadows, and from the low stretches of softer green rose the thickly-growing grass-stalks, haying

their slender ears bent with the mellow burthen of wild honey—the ambrosial feast for the lips of innocence and childhood. It was, indeed, an evening when love would bring forth its sweetest memories, and dream itself into those ecstacies of tenderness that flow from the mingled sensations of sadness and delight.

It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to see on this earth a young creature, whose youth and beauty, and slender grace of person gave her more the appearance of some visionary spirit, too exquisitely ideal for human life. Indeed, she seemed to be tinted with the hues of heaven, and never did a mortal being exist in such fine and harmonious keeping with the scene in which she moved. So light and sylph-like was her figure, though tall, that the eye almost feared she would dissolve from before it, and leave nothing to gaze at but the earth on which she trod. Yet was there still apparent in her something that preserved, with singular power, the delightful reality that she was of humanity, and subject to all those softer influences that breathe their music so sweetly over the chords of the human heart. The delicate bloom of her cheek, shaded away as it was, until it melted into the light that sparkled from her complexion—the snowy forehead, the flashing eye, in which sat the very soul of love—the lips, blushing of sweets—her whole person breathing the warmth of youth, and feeling, and so characteristic in the easiness of its motions of that gracile flexibility that has never been known to exist separate from the power of receiving varied and profound emotions—all this told the spectator, too truly, that the lovely being before him was not of another sphere, but one of the most delightful that ever appeared in this.

But hush!—here is a strain of music! Oh! what lips breathed forth that gush of touching melody which flows in such linked sweetness from the flute of an unseen performer? How soft, how gentle, but oh, how very mournful are the notes! Alas! they are steeped in sorrow, and melt away in the plaintive cadences of despair, until they mingle with silence. Surely, surely, they come from one whose heart has been brought low by the ruined hopes of an urequited passion. Yes, fair girl, thou at least dost so interpret them; but why this sympathy in one so young? Why is thy bright eye dewy with tears for the imaginary sorrows of another? And again—but ha!—why that flash of delight and terror?—that sudden suffusion of red over thy face and neck—and even now, that paleness like death! Thy heart, thy heart!—why does it throb, and why do thy knees totter? Alas! it is even so; he, the Endymion of thy dreams, as beautiful as even thou thyself in thy purple dawn of womanhood,—he from whom thou now shrinkest, yet whom thou dreadest not to meet, is approaching, and bears in his beauty the charm that will darken thy destiny.

The appearance of Osborne, unaccompanied, taught this young creature to know the full extent of his influence over her. Delight, terror, and utter confusion of thought and feeling, seized upon her the moment he became visible. She wished herself at home, but had not power to go; she blushed, she trembled, and, in the tumult of the moment, lost all presence of mind and self-possession. He had come from behind a hedge, on the path-way along which she walked, and was consequently approaching her, so that it was evident they must meet. On seeing her he ceased to play, paused a moment, and were it not that it might appear cold, and rather remarkable, he, too, would have retraced his steps homewards. In truth, both felt equally confused and equally agitated, for, although such an interview had been, for some time previously, the dearest wish of their hearts, yet would they both almost have felt relieved, had they had an opportunity of then escaping it. Their first words were uttered in a low, hesitating voice, amid pauses occasioned by the necessity of collecting their scattered thoughts, and with countenances deeply blushing from a consciousness of what they felt. Osborne turned back, mechanically, and accompanied her in her walk. After this there was a silence for some time, for neither had courage to renew the conversation. At length Osborne, in a faltering voice addressed her:

"Your dove," said he, "is quite recovered, I presume."

"Oh, yes," she replied, "it is perfectly well again."

"It is an exceedingly beautiful bird, and remarkably docile."

"I have had little difficulty in training it," she returned, and then added, very timidly, "it is also very affectionate."

The youth's eyes sparkled, as if he were about to indulge in some observation suggested by her reply, but, fearing to give it expression, he paused again; in a few minutes, however, he added—

"I think there is nothing that gives one so perfect an idea of purity and innocence as a snow-white dove, unless I except a young and beautiful girl, such as"—

He glanced at her as he spoke, and their eyes met, but in less than a moment they were withdrawn, and cast upon the earth.

"And of meekness and holiness too," she observed, after a little.

"True; but perhaps I ought to make another exception," he added, alluding to the term by which she herself was then generally known. As he spoke, his voice expressed considerable hesitation.

"Another exception," she answered, enquiringly, "it would be difficult, I think, to find any other emblem of innocence so appropriate as a dove."

"Is not a *Fawn* still more so," he replied, "it is so gentle and meek, and its motions are so full of grace and timidity, and beauty. Indeed I do not wonder, when an individual of your sex resembles it in the qualities I have mentioned, that the name is sometimes applied to her."

The tell-tale cheek of the girl blushed a recognition of the compliment implied in the words, and after a short silence, she said, in a tone that was any thing but indifferent, and with a view of changing the conversation—

"I hope you are quite recovered from your illness."

"With the exception of a very slight cough, I am," he replied.

"I think," she observed, "that you look somewhat paler than you did."

"That paleness does not proceed from indisposition, but from a far different"—he paused again, and looked evidently abashed. In the course of a minute, however, he added, "yes, I know I am pale, but not because I am unwell, for my health is nearly, if not altogether, restored, but because I am unhappy."

"Strange," said Jane, "to see one unhappy at your years."

"I think I know my own character and disposition well," he replied; "my temperament is naturally a melancholy one; the frame of my mind is like that of my body, very delicate, and capable of being affected by a thousand slight influences which pass over hearts of a stronger mould, without ever being felt. Life to me, I know, will be productive of much pain, and much enjoyment, while its tenure lasts, but that, indeed, will not be long. My sands are measured, for I feel a presentiment, a mournful and prophetic impression, that I am doomed to go down into an early grave."

The tone of passionate enthusiasm which pervaded these words, uttered as they were in a voice wherein pathos and melody were equally blended, appeared to be almost too much for a creature whose sympathy in all his moods and feelings was then so deep and congenial. She felt some difficulty in repressing her tears, and said, in a voice which no effort could keep firm.

"You ought not to indulge in those gloomy forebodings; you should struggle against them, otherwise they will distress your mind, and injure your health."

"Oh, you do not know," he proceeded, his eyes sparkling with that light which is so often the beacon of death—"you do not know the fatal fascination by which a mind, set to the sorrows of a melancholy temperament, is charmed out of its strength. But no matter how dark may be my dreams—there is one light for ever upon them—one image ever, ever before me—one figure of grace and beauty—oh, how could I deny myself the contemplation of a vision that pours into my soul a portion of itself, and effaces every other object but an entrancing sense of its own presence. I cannot, I cannot—it bears me away into a happiness that is full of sadness—where I indulge alone, without knowing why, in 'my feast of tears'—happy! happy! so I think, and so I feel; yet why is my heart sunk, and why are all my visions filled with death and the grave?"

"Oh, do not talk so frequently of death," replied the beautiful girl, "surely you need not fear it for a long while. This morbid tone of mind will pass away when you grow into better health and strength."

"Is not this hour calm?" said he, flashing his dark eyes full upon her, "see how beautiful the sun sinks in the west;—alas! so I should wish to die—as calm, and the moral lustre of my life as radiant."

"And so you shall," said Jane, in a voice full of that delightful spirit of consolation which, proceeding from such lips, breathes the most affecting power of sympathy, "so you shall, but like him, not until after the close of a long and well-spent life."

"That—that," said he, "was only a passing thought. Yes, the hour is calm, but even in such stillness, do you not observe that the aspen there to our left, this moment quivers to the breezes which we cannot feel, and by which not a leaf of any other tree about us is stirred—such I know myself to be, an aspen among men, stirred into joy or sorrow, whilst the hearts of others are at rest. Oh, how can my foretaste of life be either bright or cheerful, for when I am capable of being moved by the very breathings of passion, what must I not feel in the blast, and in the storm—even now, even now!"—The boy, here overcome by the force of his own melancholy enthusiasm, paused abruptly, and Jane, after several attempts to speak, at last said, in a voice scarcely audible—

"Is not *hope* always better than despair?"

Osborne instantly fixed his eyes upon her, and saw, that although her's were bent upon the earth, her face had become overspread

with a deep blush. While he looked she raised them, but after a single glance, at once quick and timid, she withdrew them again, a still deeper blush mantling on her cheek. He now felt a sudden thrill of rapture fall upon his heart, and rush, almost like a suffocating sensation, to his throat; his being became for a moment raised to an ecstacy too intense for the power of description to portray, and, were it not for the fear which ever accompanies the disclosure of first and youthful love, the tears of exulting delight would have streamed down his cheeks.

Both had reached a little fairy dell of vivid green, concealed by trees on every side, and in the middle of which rose a large yew, around whose trunk had been built a seat of natural turf whereon those who strolled about the ground might rest, when heated or fatigued by exercise or the sun. Here the girl sat down.

A change had now come over both. The gloom of the boy's temperament was gone, and his spirit caught its mood from that of his companion. Each at the moment breathed the low, anxious, and tender timidity of love, in it purest character. The souls of both vibrated to each other, and felt depressed with that sweetest emotion which derives all its power from the consciousness that its participation is mutual. Osborne spoke low, and his voice trembled; the girl was silent, but her bosom panted, and her frame shook from head to foot. At length Osborne spoke.

"I sometimes sit here alone, and amuse myself with my flute; but of late—of late—I can hear no music that is not melancholy."

"I, too, prefer mournful — mournful music," replied Jane. "That was a beautiful air you played just now."

Osborne put the flute to his lips, and commenced playing over again the air she had praised; but, on glancing at the fair girl, he perceived her eyes fixed upon him with a look of such deep and devoted passion as utterely overcame him. Her eyes, as before, were immediately withdrawn, but there dwelt again upon her burning cheek such a consciousness of her love as could not, for a moment, be mistaken. In fact she betrayed all the confused symptoms of one who felt that the state of her heart had been discovered. Osborne ceased playing; for such was his agitation that he scarcely knew what he thought or did.

"I cannot go on," said he in a voice which equally betrayed the state of his heart; "I cannot play;" and at the same time he seated himself beside her.

Jane rose as he spoke, and in a broken voice, full of an expression like distress, said hastily:

"It is time I should go;—I am,—I am too long out."

Osborne caught her hand, and in words that burned with the deep and melting contagion of his passion, said simply:

"Do not go:—oh do not *yet* go!"

She looked full upon him, and perceived that as he spoke his face became deadly pale, as if her words were to seal his happiness or misery.

"Oh do not leave me now," he pleaded; "do not go, and my life may yet be happy."

"I must," she replied, with great difficulty; "I cannot say: I do not wish you to be unhappy;" and whilst saying this, the tears that ran in silence down her cheeks proved too clearly how dear his happiness must ever be to her.

Osborne's arm glided round her waist, and she resumed her seat,—or rather tottered into it.

"You are in tears," he exclaimed. "Oh could it be true! Is it not, my beloved girl? It is—it is—*love!* Oh surely, surely it must —it must!"

She sobbed aloud once or twice; and, as he kissed her unresisting lips, she murmured out, "It is; it is; I love you."

Oh life! how dark and unfathomable are thy mysteries! And why is it that thou permittest the course of true love, like this, so seldom to run smooth, when so many who, uniting through the impulse of sordid passion, sink into a state of obtuse indifference, over which the lights and shadows that touch thee into thy finest perceptions of enjoyment pass in vain.

It is a singular fact, but no less true than singular, that since the world began there never was known any instance of an anxiety, on the part of youthful lovers, to prolong to an immoderate extent the scene in which the first mutual avowal of their passions takes place. The excitement is too profound, and the waste of those delicate spirits, which are expended in such interviews, is much too great to permit the soul to bear such an excess of happiness long. Independently of this, there is associated with it an ultimate enjoyment, for which the lovers immediately fly to solitude; there, in the certainty of waking bliss, to think over and over again of all that has occurred between them, and to luxuriate in the conviction, that at length the heart has not another wish, but sinks into the solitary charm which expands it with such a sense of rapturous and exulting delight.

The interview between our lovers was, consequently, not long. The secret of their

[illegible] felt anxious [illegible] sister's ecstacy [illegible] which the scene we [illegible] created. Jane did [illegible] the evening devotions [illegible] and this was the first [illegible] their knowledge, been [illegible] before. Borne away by [illegible] had just occurred, she was [illegible] to her own room, after reach- [illegible] which Mr. Sinclair, who had re- [illegible] observed, desired that she be [illegible] the drawing-room.

"It is the first neglect," he observed, "of a necessary duty, and it would be wrong in me to let it pass without at least pointing it out to the dear child as an error, and knowing from her own lips why it has happened."

Terror and alarm, like what might be supposed to arise from the detection of secret guilt, seized upon the young creature so violently that she had hardly strength to enter the drawing-room without support: her face became the image of death, and her whole frame tottered and trembled visibly.

"Jane, my dear, why were you absent from prayers this evening?" inquired her father, with his usual mildness of manner.

This question, to one who had never yet been, in the slightest instance, guilty of falsehood, was indeed a terrible one; and especially to a girl so extremely timid as was this his best beloved daughter.

"Papa," she at last replied, "I was out walking;" but as she spoke there was that in her voice and manner which betrayed the guilt of an insincere reply.

"I know, my dear, you were; but although you have frequently been out walking, yet I do not remember that you ever stayed away from our evening worship before. Why is this?"

Her father's question was repeated in vain. She hung her head and returned no answer. She tried to speak, but from her parched lips not a word could proceed. She felt as if all the family that moment were conscious of the occurrence between her and her lover; and if the wish could have relieved her, she would almost have wished to die, so much did she shrink abashed in their presence.

"Tell me, my daughter," proceeded her father, more seriously, "has your absence been occasioned by anything that you are ashamed or afraid to mention? From me, Jane, you ought to have no secrets;—you are yet too young to think away from your father's heart and from your mother's also;—speak candidly, my child,—speak candidly,—I expect it."

As he uttered the last words, the head of their beautiful flower sank upon her bosom, and in a moment she lay insensible upon the sofa on which she had been sitting.

This was a shock for which neither the father nor the family were prepared. William flew to her,—all of them crowded about her, and scarcely had he raised that face so pale, but now so mournfully beautiful in its insensibility, when her mother and sisters burst into tears and wailings, for they feared at the moment that their beloved one must have been previously seized with sudden illness, and was then either taken, or about to be taken from their eyes for ever. By the coolness of her father, however, they were directed how to restore her, in which, after a lapse of not less than ten minutes, they succeeded.

When she recovered, her mother folded her in her arms, and her sisters embraced her with tenderness and tears. Her father then gently caught her hand in his, and said with much affection:

"Jane, my child, you are ill. Why not have told us so?"

The beautiful girl knelt before him for a moment, but again rose up, and hiding her head in his bosom, exclaimed—weeping—

"Papa, bless me, oh, bless me, and *forgive* me."

"I do; I do," said the old man; and as he spoke a few large tears trickled down his cheeks, and fell upon her golden locks.

PART II.

It is a singular fact, but one which we know to be true, that not only the affection of parents, but that of brothers and sisters, goes down with greater tenderness to the youngest of the family, all other circumstances being equal. This is so universally felt and known, that it requires no further illustration from us. At home, Jane Sinclair was loved more devotedly in consequence of being the most innocent and beautiful of her father's children; in addition to this, however, she was cherished with that peculiar sensibility of attachment by which the human heart is always swayed towards its youngest and its last.

On witnessing her father's tenderness, she concealed her face in his bosom, and wept for some time in silence, and by a gentle pressure of her delicate arms, as they encircled his neck, intimated her sense of his affectionate indulgence towards her; and perhaps, could it have been understood, a tacit acknowledgment of her own unworthiness on that occasion to receive it.

At length, she said, after an effort to suppress her tears, "Papa, I will go to bed."

"Do, my love; and Jane, forget not to address the Throne of God before you sleep."

"I did not intend to neglect it, papa. Mamma, come with me." She then kissed her sisters and bade good-night to William; after which she withdrew, accompanied by her mother, whilst the eyes of those who remained were fixed upon her with love and pride and admiration.

"Mamma," said she, when they reached the apartment, "allow me to sleep alone to-night."

"Jane, your mind appears to be depressed, darling," replied her mother; "has anything disturbed you, or are you really ill?"

"I am quite well, mamma, and not at all depressed; but do allow me to sleep in the closet bed."

"No, my dear, Agnes will sleep there, and you can sleep in your own as usual; the poor girl will wonder why you leave her, Jane; she will feel so lonely, too."

"But, mamma, it would gratify me very much, at least for *this* night. I never wished to sleep away from Agnes before; and I am certain she will excuse me when she knows I prefer it."

"Well, my love, of course *I* can have no objection; I only fear you are not so well as you imagine yourself. At all events, Jane, remember your father's advice to pray to God; and remember this, besides, that from me at least you ought to have no secrets. Good-night, dear, and may the Lord take care of you!"

She then kissed her with an emotion of sorrow for which she could scarcely account, and passed down to the room wherein the other members of the family were assembled.

"I know not what is wrong with her," she observed, in reply to their enquiries. "She declares she is perfectly well, and that her mind is not at all depressed."

"In that I agree with her," said William; "her eye occasionally sparkled with something that resembled joy more than depression."

"She begged of me to let her sleep alone to-night," continued the mother; "so that you, Agnes, must lie in the closet bed."

"She must, certainly, be unwell then," replied Agnes, "or she would hardly leave me. Indeed I know that her spirits have not been so good of late as usual. Formerly we used to chat ourselves asleep, but for some weeks past she has been quite changed, and seldom spoke at all after going to bed. Neither did she sleep so well latterly as she used to."

"She is, indeed, a delicate flower," observed her father, "and a very slight blast, poor thing, will make her droop—droop perhaps into an early grave!"

"Do not speak so gloomily, my dear Henry," said her mother. "What is there in her particular case to justify any such apprehension?"

"Her health has been always good, too," observed Maria; "but the fact is, we love her so affectionately that many things disturb us about her which we would never feel if we loved her less."

"Mary," said her father, "you have in a few words expressed the true state of our feelings with respect to the dear child. We shall find her, I trust, in good health and spirits in the morning; and please the Divine Will, all will again be well—but what's the matter with *you*, Agnes?"

Mr. Sinclair had, a moment before, observed that an expression of thought, blended with sorrow, overshadowed the face of his second daughter. The girl, on hearing her father's enquiry, looked mournfully upon him, whilst the tears ran silently down her cheeks.

"I will go to her," said she, "and stay with her if she lets me. Oh, papa, why talk of an early grave for *her?* How could we lose her? I could not—and I cannot bear even to think of it."

She instantly rose and proceeded to Jane's room, but in a few minutes returned, saying, "I found her at prayers, papa."

"God bless her, God bless her! I knew she would not voluntarily neglect so sacred a duty. As she wishes to be alone, it is better not to disturb her; solitude and quiet will no doubt contribute to her composure, and it is probably for this purpose that she wishes to be left to herself."

After this the family soon retired to bed, with the exception of Mr. Sinclair himself, who, contrary to his practice, remained for a considerable time longer up than usual. It appeared, indeed, as if the shadow of some coming calamity had fallen upon their hearts, or that the affection they had entertained for her was so mysteriously deep as to produce that prophetic sympathy which is often known to operate in a presentiment of sorrow that never fails to be followed by disaster. It is difficult to account for this singular succession of cause to effect, as they act upon our emotions, except probably by supposing that it is an unconscious development of those latent faculties which are decreed to expand into a full growth in a future state of existence. Be this as it may, these loving relatives experienced upon that night a mood of mind such as they had never before known, even when the hand of death had taken a brother and sister from among

them. It was not grief, but a wild kind of dread, slight it is true, but distinct in its character, and not dissimilar to that fear which falls upon the spirits during one of those glooms that precede some dark and awful convulsion of nature. Her father remained up, as we have said, longer than the rest, and in the silence which succeeded their retirement for the night, his voice could be occasionally heard in deep and earnest supplication. It was evident that he had recourse to prayer; and by some of the expressions caught from time to time, they gathered that "his dear child," and "her peace of mind" were the object of the foreboding father's devotions.

Jane's distress, at concealing the cause of her absence from prayers, though acute at the moment of enquiry, was nevertheless more transient than one might suppose from the alarming effects it produced. Her mind was at the time in a state of tumult and excitement, such as she had never till then experienced, and the novel guilt of dissimulation, by superinducing her first impression of deliberate crime, opposed itself so powerfully to the exulting sense of her newborn happiness, that both produced a shock of conflicting emotions which a young mind, already so much exhausted, could not resist. She felt, therefore, that a strange darkness shrouded her intellect, in which all distinct traces of thought, and all memory of the past were momentarily lost. Her frame, too, at the best but slender and much enfeebled by the preceding interview with Osborne, and her present embarrassment, could not bear up against this chaotic struggle between delight and pain. It was, no doubt, impossible for her relatives to comprehend all this, and hence their alarm. She was too pure and artless to be suspected of concealing the truth; and they consequently entertained not the slightest suspicion of that kind; but still their affections were aroused, and what might have terminated in an ordinary manner, ended in that unusual mood we have described.

With a scrupulous attention to her father's precept, as well as from a principle of early and sincere piety, she strove on reaching her bedroom to compose her mind in prayer, and to beg the pardon of Heaven for her wilful suppression of the truth. This was a task, however, to which she was altogether unequal. In vain she uttered words expressive of her sorrow, and gave language to sentiments of deep repentance; there was but one idea, but one image in her mind, viz.: her beautiful boy, and the certainty that she was the object of his love. Again and again she attempted to pray, but still with the same success. It was to no purpose that she resolved to banish him from her thoughts, until at least the solemn act of her evening worship should be concluded; for ere she had uttered half a sentence the image would return, as if absolutely to mock her devotions. In this manner she continued for some time, striving to advance with a sincere heart in her address to heaven; again recommencing with a similar purpose, and as often losing herself in those visions that wrapped her spirit in their transports. At length she arose, and for a moment felt a deep awe fall upon her. The idea that she could not pray, seemed to her as a punishment annexed by God to her crime of having tampered with the love of truth, and disregarded her father's injunctions not to violate it. But this, also, soon passed away: she lay down, and at once surrendered her heart and thought and fancy to the power of that passion, which, like the jealous tyrant of the East, seemed on this occasion resolved to bear no virtue near the heart in which it sat enthroned. Such, however, was not its character, as the reader will learn when he proceeds; true love being in our opinion rather the guardian of the other virtues than their foe.

The next morning, when Jane awoke, the event of yesterday flashed on her memory with a thrill of pleasure that made her start up in a recumbent posture in the bed. Her heart bounded, her pulse beat high, and a sudden sensation of hysterical delight rushed to her throat with a transport that would have been painful, did she not pass out of a state of such panting ecstacy and become dissolved in tears. She wept, but how far did she believe the cause of her emotion to be removed from sorrow? She wept, yet alas! alas! never did tears of such delight flow from a source that drew a young heart onward to greater darkness and desolation. Weep on, fair girl, in thy happiness; for the day will come when thou will not be able to find one tear in thy misery!

Her appearance the next morning exhibited to the family no symptoms of illness. On the contrary, she never looked better, indeed seldom so well. Her complexion was clearer than usual, her spirit more animated, and the dancing light of her eye plainly intimated by its sparkling that her young heart was going on the way of its love rejoicing. Her family were agreeably surprised at this, especially when they reflected upon their anxiety concerning her on the preceding night. To her distress on that occasion they made not the slightest allusion; they felt it sufficient that the beloved of their hearts was well, and that from the evident flow of her

spirits there existed no rational grounds for any apprehension respecting her. After breakfast she sat sewing for some time with her sisters, but it was evident that her mind was not yet sufficiently calm to permit her as formerly to sustain a proper part in their conversation. Ever and anon they could observe by the singular light which sparkled in her eyes, as with a sudden rush of joy, that her mind was engaged on some other topic, and this at a moment when some appeal or interrogatory to herself rendered such abstracted enjoyment more obvious. Sensible, therefore, of her incompetency as yet to regulate her imagination so as to escape notice, she withdrew in about an hour to her own room, there once more to give aloose to indulgence.

Our readers may perceive that the position of Jane Sinclair, in her own family, was not very favorable to the formation of a firm character. The regulation of a mind so imaginative, and of feelings so lively and susceptible, required a hand of uncommon skill and delicacy. Indeed her case was one of unusual difficulty. In the first place, her meekness and extreme sweetness of temper rendered it almost impossible in a family where her own qualities predominated, to find any deviation from duty which might be seized upon without harshness as a pretext for inculcating those precautionary principles that were calculated to strengthen the weak points which her character may have presented. Even those weak points, if at the time they could be so termed, were perceptible only in the exercise of her virtues, so that it was a matter of some risk, especially in the case of one so young, to reprove an excess on the right side, lest in doing so you checked the influence of the virtue that accompanied it. Such errors, if they can be called so, when occurring in the conduct of those whom we love, are likely to call forth any thing but censure. It is naturally supposed, and in general with too much truth, that time and experience will remove the excess, and leave the virtue not more than equal to the demands of life upon it. Her father, however, was, as the reader may have found, by no means ignorant of those traits in the constitution of her mind from which danger or happiness might ultimately be apprehended; neither did he look on them with indifference. In truth, they troubled him much, and on more than one occasion he scrupled not fully to express his fears of their result. It was he, the reader perceives, who, on the evening of her first interview with Osborne, gave so gloomy a tone to the feelings of the family, and impressed them at all events more deeply than they otherwise would have felt, with a vague presentiment of some unknown evil that was to befall her. She was, however, what is termed, the *pet* of the family, the centre to which all their affections turned; and as she herself felt conscious of this, there is little doubt that the extreme indulgence, and almost blameable tenderness which they exercised towards her, did by imperceptible degrees disqualify her from undergoing with firmness those conflicts of the heart, to which a susceptibility of the finer emotions rendered her peculiarly liable. Indeed among the various errors prevalent in domestic life, there is scarcely one that has occasioned more melancholy consequences than that of carrying indulgence towards a favorite child too far; and creating, under the slightest instances of self-denial, a sensitiveness or impatience, arising from a previous habit of being gratified in all the whims and caprices of childhood or youth. The fate of favorite children in life is almost proverbially unhappy, and we doubt not that if the various lunatic receptacles were examined, the malady, in a majority of cases, might be traced to an excess of indulgence and want of proper discipline in early life. Had Mr. Sinclair insisted on knowing from his daughter's lips the cause of her absence from prayers, and given a high moral proof of the affection he bore her, it is probable that the consciousness on her part of his being cognizant of her passion, would have kept it so far within bounds as to submit to the control of reason instead of ultimately subverting it. This, however, he unhappily omitted to do, not because he was at all ignorant that a strict sense of duty, and a due regard for his daughter's welfare, demanded it; but because her distress, and the childlike simplicity with which she cast herself upon his bosom, touched his spirit, and drew forth all the affection of a parent who "loved not wisely but too well."

Let not my readers, however, condemn him too harshly for this, for alas, he paid, in the bitterness of a father's misery, a woeful and mysterious penalty of a father's weakness. His beloved one went before, and the old man could not remain behind her; but their sorrows have passed away, and both now enjoy that peace, which, for the last few years of their lives, the world did not give them.

From this time forth Jane's ear listened only to the music of a happy heart, and her eye saw nothing but the beauty of that vision which shone in her pure bosom like the star of evening in some limpid current that glides smoothly between rustic meadows, on whose green banks the heart is charmed into happiness by the distant hum of pastoral life.

Love, however, will not be long without its object, nor can the soul be happy in the absence of its counterpart. For some time after the interview in which the passion of our young lovers was revealed, Jane found solitude to be the same solace to her love, that human sympathy is to affliction. The certainty that she was now beloved, caused her heart to lapse into those alternations of repose and enjoyment which above all other states of feeling nourish its affections. Indeed the change was surprising which she felt within her and around her. On looking back, all that portion of her life that had passed before her attachment to Osborne, seemed dark and without any definite purpose. She wondered at it as at a mystery which she could not solve; it was only now that she lived; her existence commenced, she thought, with her passion, and with it only she was satisfied it could cease. Nature wore in her eyes a new aspect, was clothed with such beauty, and breathed such a spirit of love and harmony, as she only perceived now for the first time. Her parents were kinder and better she thought than they had before appeared to her, and her sisters and brother seemed endued with warmer affections and brighter virtues than they had ever possessed. Every thing near her and about her partook in a more especial manner of this delightful change; the servants were won by sweetness so irresistible—the dogs were more kindly caressed, and Ariel—her own Ariel was, if possible, more beloved.

Oh why—why is not love so pure and exalted as this, more characteristic of human attachments? And why is it that affection, as exhibited in general life, is so rarely seen unstained by the tint of some darker passion? Love on, fair girl—love on in thy purity and innocence! The beauty that thou seest in nature, and the music it sends forth, exist only in thy own heart, and the light which plays around thee like a glory, is only the reflection of that image whose lustre has taken away the shadows from thy spirit!

In the mean time the heart, as we said, will, after the repose which must follow excitement, necessarily move towards that object in which it seeks its ultimate enjoyment. A week had now elapsed, and Jane began to feel troubled by the absence of her lover. Her eye wished once more to feast upon his beauty, and her ear again to drink in the melody of his voice. It was true—it was surely true—and she put her long white fingers to her forehead while thinking of him—yes, yes—it was true that he loved her—but her heart called again for his presence, and longed to hear him once more repeat, in fervid accents of eloquence, the enthusiasm of his passion.

Acknowledged love, however, in pure and honorable minds, places the conduct under that refined sense of propriety, which is not only felt to be a restraint upon the freedom of virtuous principle itself, but is observed with that jealous circumspection which considers even suspicion as a stain upon its purity. No matter how intense affection in a virtuous bosom may be, yet no decorum of life is violated by it, no outwork even of the minor morals surrendered, nor is any act or expression suffered to appear that might take away from the exquisite feeling of what is morally essential to female modesty. For this reason, therefore, it was that our heroine, though anxious to meet Osborne again, could not bring herself to walk towards her accustomed haunts, lest he might suspect that she thus indelicately sought him out. *He* had frequently been there, and wondered that *she* never came; but however deep his disappointment at her absence, or it might be, neglect, yet in consequence of their last interview, he could not summon courage to pay a visit, as he had sometimes before, to her family.

Nearly a fortnight had now elapsed, when Jane, walking one day in a small shrubbery that skirted the little lawn before her father's door, received a note by a messenger whom she recognized as a servant of Mr. Osborne's.

The man, after putting it into her hands, added:

"I was desired, if possible, to bring back an answer."

She blushed deeply on receiving it, and shook so much that the tremor of her small white hands gave evident proof of the agitation which it produced in her bosom. She read as follows:-

"Oh why is it that I cannot see you! or what has become of you? This absence is painful to me beyond the power of endurance. Alas, if you loved with the deep and burning devotion that I do, you would not thus avoid me. Do you not know, and feel, that our hearts have poured into each other the secret of our mutual passion. Oh surely, surely, you cannot forget that moment—a moment for which I could willingly endure a century of pain. That moment has thrown a charm into my existence that will render my whole future life sweet. All that I may suffer will be, and already is softened in the consciousness that you love me. Oh let me see you—I cannot rest, I cannot live without you. I beseech you, I implore you, as you would not bring me down to despair and sorrow—as you would not wring my heart with the

agony of disappointment—to meet me this evening at the same place and the same hour as before.

"Yours—*yours for ever*,

"H. O.

"N. B.—The bearer is trustwórthy, and already acquainted with the secret of our attachment, so that you need not hesitate to send me a reply by him—and let it be a *written* one."

After persuing this, she paused for a moment, and felt so much embarrassed by the fact of their love being known to a third person, that she could not look upon the messenger, while addressing him, without shamefacedness and confusion.

"Wait a little," she said at length, "I will return presently"—and with a singular conflict between joy, shame, and terror, she passed with downcast looks out of the shrubbery, sought her own room, and having placed writing materials before her, attempted to write. It was not, however, till after some minutes that she could collect herself sufficiently to use them. As she took the pen in her hand, something like guilt seemed to press upon her heart—the blood forsook her cheeks, and her strength absolutely left her.

"Is not this wrong," she thought. "I have already been guilty of dissimulation, if not of direct falsehood to my father, and now I am about to enter into a correspondence without his knowledge."

The acuteness of her moral sense occasioned her, in fact, to feel much distress, and the impression of religious sanction early inculcated upon a mind naturally so gentle and innocent as hers, cast by its solemn influence a deep gloom over the brief history of their loves. She laid the pen down, and covering her face with both hands, burst into a flood of tears.

"Why is it," she said to herself, "that a conviction as if of guilt mingles itself with my affection for him; and that snatches of pain and melancholy darken my mind, when I join in our morning and evening worship? I fear, I fear, that God's grace and protection have been withdrawn from me ever since I deceived my father. But these errors," she proceeded, "are my own, and not Henry's—and why should *he* suffer pain and distress because *I* have been uncandid to others?"

Upon this slender argument she proceeded to write the following reply, but still with an undercurrent of something like remorse stealing through a mind that felt with incredible delicacy the slightest deviation from what was right, yet possessed not the necessary firmness to resist what was wrong.

"I know that it is indelicate, and very improper—yes, and sinful in me to write to you—and I would not do so, but that I cannot bear to think that *you* should suffer pain. Why should you be distressed, when you know that my affection for you will never change?—*will*, alas! I should add, *can* never change. Dear Henry, is it not sufficient for our happiness that our love is mutual? It ought at least to be so; and it would be so, provided we kept its character unstained by any deviation from moral feeling or duty in the sight of God. You must not continue to write to me, for I shall not, and I can not persist in a course of deliberate insincerity to those who love me with so much affection. I will, however, see you this day, two hours earlier than the time appointed in your note. I could not absent myself from the family *then*, without again risking an indirect breach of truth, and this I am resolved never to do. I hope you will not think less of me for writing to you, although it be very wrong on my part. I have already wept for it, and my eyes are even now filled with tears; but *you* surely will not be a harsh judge upon the conduct of *your own*

"Jane Sinclair."

Having sealed this letter, she hid it in her bosom, and after delaying a short time to compose her features, again proceeded to the shrubbery, where she found the servant waiting. Simple as was the act of handing him the note, yet so inexpressibly delicate was the whole tenor of her mind, that the slightest step irreconcilable with her standard of female propriety, left behind it a distinct and painful trace that disturbed the equilibrium of a character so finely balanced. With an abashed face and burning brow, she summoned courage, however, to give it, and was instantly proceeding home, when the messenger observed that she had given him the wrong letter. She then took the right one from her bosom, and placing it in his hands would again have hurried into the house.

"You do not mean, I suppose, to send him back his own note," observed the man, handing her Osborne's as he spoke.

"No, no," she replied, "give it to me; I knew not—in fact, it was a mistake." She then received Osborne's letter, and hastily withdrew.

The reader may have observed, that so long as Jane merely contemplated the affection that subsisted between Osborne and herself, as a matter unconnected with any relative association, and one on which the heart will dwell with delight while nothing intrudes to disturb its serenity, so long was the contem-

plation one of perfect happiness. But the moment she approached her family, or found herself on the eve of taking another step in its progress, such was her almost morbid candor, and her timid shrinking from any violation of truth, that her affection for this very reason became darkened, as she herself said, by snatches of melancholy and pain.

It is indeed difficult to say whether such a tender perception of good and evil as characterized all her emotions, may not have predisposed her mind to the unhappy malady which eventually overcame it; or whether, on the other hand, the latent existence of the malady in her temperament may not have rendered such perceptions too delicate for the healthy discharge of human duties.

Be this as it may, our innocent and beautiful girl is equally to be pitied; and we trust that in either case the sneers of the coarse and heartless will be spared against a character they cannot understand. At all events, it is we think slightly, and but slightly evident, that even at the present stage of her affection, something prophetic of her calamity, in a faintly perceptible degree may, to an observing mind, be recognized in the vivid and impulsive power with which that affection has operated upon her. If anything could prove this, it is the fervency with which, previous to the hour of appointment, she bent in worship before God, to beseech His pardon for the secret interview she was about to give her lover. And in any other case, such an impression, full of religious feeling as it was, would have prevented the subject of it from acting contrary to its tendency; but here was the refined dread of error, lively even to acuteness, absolutely incapable of drawing back the mind from the transgression of moral duty which filled it with a feeling nearly akin to remorse.

Jane that day met the family at dinner, merely as a matter of course, for she could eat nothing. There was, independently of this, a timidity in her manner which they noticed, but could not understand.

"Why," said her father, "you were never a great eater, Jane, but latterly you live, like the chameleon, on air. Surely your health cannot be good, with such a poor appetite;—your own Ariel eats more."

"I feel my health to be very good, papa; but—" she hesitated a little, attempted to speak, and paused again; "Although my health is good," she at last proceeded, "I am not, papa,—I mean my spirits are sometimes better than they ever were, and sometimes more depressed."

"They are depressed now, Jane," said her mother.

"I don't know that, mamma. Indeed I could not describe my present state of feeling; but I think,—indeed I know I am not so good as I ought to be. I am not so good, mamma, and maybe one day you will all have to forgive me more than you think."

Her father laid his knife and fork down, and fixing his eyes affectionately upon her, said:

"My child, there is something wrong with you."

Jane herself, who sat beside her mother, made no reply; but putting her arms about her neck, she laid her cheek against hers, and wept for many minutes. She then rose in a paroxysm of increasing sorrow, and throwing her arms about her father's neck also, sobbed out as upon the occasion already mentioned:—

"Oh, papa, pity and forgive me;—your poor Jane, pity her and forgive her."

The old man struggled with his grief, for he saw that the tears of the family rendered it a duty upon him to be firm: nay, he smiled after a manner, and said in a voice of forced good humor:

"You are a foolish slut, Jane, and play upon us, because you know we pet and love you too much. If you cannot eat your dinner go play, and get an appetite for to-morrow."

She kissed him, and as was her habit of compliance with his slightest wish, left the room as he had desired her.

"Henry," said his wife, "there *is* something wrong with her."

For a time he could not speak; but after a deep silence he wiped away a few straggling tears, and replied:

"Yes! yes! do you not see that there is a mystery upon my child!—a mystery which weighs down my heart with affliction."

"Dear papa," said Agnes, "don't forbode evil for her."

"It's a mere nervous affection," said William. "She ought to take more exercise. Of late she has been too much within."

Maria and Agnes exchanged looks; and for the first time, a suspicion of the probable cause flashed simultaneously across their minds. They sat beside each other at dinner, and Maria said in a whisper:

"Agnes, you and I are thinking of the same thing."

"I am thinking of Jane," said her candid and affectionate sister.

"My opinion is," rejoined Maria, "that she is attached to Charles Osborne."

"I suspect it is so," whispered Agnes. "Indeed from many things that occur to me I am now certain of it."

"I don't see any particular harm in that," replied Maria.

"It may be a very unhappy attachment for Jane, though," said Agnes. "Only think, Maria, if Osborne should not return her affection: I know Jane,—she would sink under it."

"Not return her affection!" replied her sister. "Where would he find another so beautiful, and every way so worthy of him?"

"Very true, Maria; and I trust in heaven he may think so. But how, if he should never know or suspect her love for him?"

"I cannot answer *that*," said the other; "but we will talk more about it by-and-by."

Whilst this dialogue went on in a low tone, the other members of the family sat in silence and concern, each evidently anxious to develop the mystery of Jane's recent excitement at dinner. At length the old man's eye fell upon his two other daughters, and he said:

"What is this, children—what is this whispering all about? Perhaps some of you can explain the conduct of that poor child."

"But, papa," said Agnes, "you are not to know *all* our secrets."

"Am I not, indeed, Aggy? That's pretty evident from the cautious tone in which you and Mary speak."

"Well, but Agnes is right, Henry," said her mother: "to know the daughters' secrets is my privilege—and yours to know William's—if he has any."

"Upon my word, mother, mine are easily carried, I assure you."

"Suppose, papa," observed Agnes, good-humoredly, "that I was to fall in love, now—as is not——

"Improbable that you may—you baggage," replied her father, smiling, whilst he completed the sentence; "Well, and you would not tell me if you did?"

"No indeed, sir; I should not. Perhaps I ought,—but I could not, certainly, bring myself to do it. For instance, would it be either modest or delicate in me, to go and say to your face, 'Papa, I'm in love.' In that case the next step, I suppose, would be to make you the messenger between us. Now would you not expect as much, papa, if I told you?" said the arch and lively girl.

"Aggy, you are a presuming gipsy," replied the old man, joining in the laugh which she had caused. "Me your messenger!"

"Yes, and a steady one you would make, sir. I am sure you would not, at all events, overstep your instructions."

"That will be one quality essentially necessary to any messenger of *yours*, Agnes," replied her father, in the same spirit.

"Papa," said she, suddenly changing her manner, and laying aside her gayety, "what I said in jest of myself may be seriously true of another in this very family. Suppose Jane——"

"Jane!" exclaimed the old man;—"impossible! She is but a girl!—but a child!"

"Agnes, this is foolish of you," said her sister. "It is possible, after all, that you are doing poor Jane injustice. Papa, Agnes only speaks from suspicion. We are not certain of anything. It was I mentioned it first, but merely from suspicion."

"If Jane's affections are engaged," said her father, "I tremble to think of the consequences should she experience the slightest disappointment. But it cannot be, Maria,—the girl has too much sense, and her principles are too well established."

"What is it you mean, girls?" inquired their mother, in a tone of surprise and alarm.

"Indeed, Agnes," said Maria, reprovingly, "it is neither fair nor friendly to poor Jane, to bring out a story founded only on a mere surmise. Agnes insists, mamma, that Jane is attached to Charles Osborne."

"It certainly occurred to us only a few moments ago, I allow," replied Agnes; "but if *I* am mistaken in this, I will give up my judgment in everything else. And I mentioned it solely to prevent our own distress, particularly papa's, with respect to the change that is of late so visible in her conduct and manner."

Strange to say, however, that Mr. Sinclair and his wife both repudiated the idea of her attachment to Osborne, and insisted that Agnes' suspicion was rash and groundless.

It was impossible, they said, that such an attachment could exist; Jane and Osborne had seen too little of each other, and were both of a disposition too shy and diffident to rush so precipitately into a passion that is usually the result of far riper years than either of them had yet reached.

Mr. Sinclair admitted that Jane was a girl full of affection, and likely to be extremely susceptible, yet it was absurd, he added, to suppose for a moment, that she would suffer them to be engaged, or her peace of mind disturbed, by a foolish regard for a smooth-faced boy, and she herself not much beyond sixteen.

There is scarcely to be found, in the whole range of human life and character, any observation more true, and at the same time more difficult to be understood, than the singular infatuation of parents who have survived their own passions,—whenever the prudence of their children happens to be called in question.

We know not whether such a fact be necessary to the economy of life, and the free breathings of youthful liberty, but this at least is clear to any one capable of noting

down its ordinary occurrences, that no matter how acutely and vividly parents themselves may have felt the passion of love when young, they appear as ignorant of the symptoms that mark its stages in the lives of their children, as if all memory of its existence had been obliterated out of their being. Perhaps this may be wisely designed, and no doubt it is; but, alas! its truth is a melancholy comment upon the fleeting character of the only passion that charms our early life, and fills the soul with sensations too ethereal to be retained by a heart which grosser associations have brought beneath the standard of purity necessary for their existence in it.

Jane, as she bent her way to the place of appointment, felt like one gradually emerging out of darkness into light. The scene at dinner had quickened her moral sense, which, as the reader already knows, was previous to that perhaps morbidly acute. Every step, however, towards the idol of her young devotion, removed the memory of what had occurred at home, and collected around her heart all the joys and terrors that in maidenly diffidence characterize the interview she was about to give her lover. Oh how little do we know of those rapid lights and shadows which shift and tremble across the spirits of the gentle sex, when approaching to hold this tender communion with those whom they love. Nothing that we remember resembles the busy working of the soul on such occasions, so much as those lucid streamers which flit in sweeps of delicate light along the northern sky, filling it at once with beauty and terror, and emitting at the same time a far and almost inaudible undertone of unbroken music.

Trembling and fluttering like a newly-caught bird, Jane approached the place of meeting and found Osborne there awaiting her. The moment he saw the graceful young creature approach him, he felt that he had never until then loved her so intensely. The first declaration of their attachment was made during an accidental interview, but there is a feeling of buoyant confidence that flashes up from the heart, when, at the first concerted meeting of love we see the object of our affection advance towards us,—for that deliberate act of a faithful heart separates the beloved one, in imagination, to ourselves, and gives a fulness to our enjoyment which melts us in an exulting tenderness indescribable by language. Those who have doubted the punctuality of some beloved girl, and afterwards seen her come, will allow that our description of that rapturous moment is not overdrawn.

"My dear, dear Jane," exclaimed Osborne, taking her hand and placing her beside him, "I neither knew my own heart nor the extent of its affection for you until this meeting. In what terms shall I express—but I will not attempt it—I cannot—but my soul burns with love for you, such as was never felt by mortal."

"It is my trust and confidence in your love that brings me here," she replied; "and indeed, Charles, it is more than that—I know your health is, at the best, easily affected, and your spirits naturally prone to despondency; and I feared," said the artless girl, "that—that—indeed I feared you might suffer pain, and that pain might bring on ill health again."

"And I am so dear to you, Jane?"

Jane replied by a smile and looked inexpressibly tender.

"I am, I am!" he exclaimed with rapture; "and now the world—life—nothing—nothing can add to the fulness of my happiness. And your note, my beloved—the conclusion of it—*your own Jane Sinclair!* But you must be more my own yet—legally and forever mine! Mine! Shall I be able to bear it!—shall I? Jane?" said he, his enthusiastic temperament kindling as he spoke—"Oh what, my dearest, my own dearest, if this should not last, will it not consume me? Will it not destroy me? this overwhelming excess of rapture!"

"But you must restrain it, Charles; surely the suspense arising from the doubt of our being beloved is more painful than the certainty that we are so."

"Yes; but the exulting sense, my dear Jane, to me almost oppressive,—but I rave, I rave; it is all delight—all happiness! Yes, it will prolong life,—for we know what we live for."

"We do," said Jane, in a low, sweet voice, whilst her eye fed upon his beauty. "Do I not live for you, Charles?"

His lip was near her cheek as she spoke; he then gently drew her to him, and in a voice lower, and if possible more melodious than her own, said, "Oh Jane, is there not something inexpressibly affectionate—some wild and melting charm in the word *wife?*"

"That is a feeling," she replied, evidently softened by the tender spirit of his words, "of which you are a better judge than I can be."

"Oh say, my dearest, let me hear you say with your own lips, that you will be my wife."

"I will," she whispered—and as she spoke, he inhaled the fragrance of her breath.

"My wife!"

"Your wife!"

Sweet, and long, and rapturous was the kiss which sealed this sacred and entrancing

promise. The pathetic sentiment that pervaded their attachment kept their passion pure, and seldom have two lovers so beautiful, sat cheek to cheek together, in an embrace guileless and innocent as theirs.

Jane, however, withdrew herself from his arms, and for a few moments felt not even conscious, so far was her heart removed from evil, that an embrace under such circumstances was questionable, much less improper. Following so naturally from the tenderness of their dialogue, it seemed to be rather the necessary action arising from the eloquence of their feeling, than an act which might incur censure or reproof. Her fine sense of propriety, however, could be scarcely said to have slumbered, for, with a burning cheek and a sobbing voice, she exclaimed,

"Charles, these secret meetings must cease. They have involved me in a course of dissimulation and falsehood towards my family, which I cannot bear. You say you love me, and I know you do, but surely you could not esteem, nor place full confidence in a girl, who, to gratify either her own affection or yours, would deceive her parents."

"But, my dearest girl, you reason too severely. Surely almost all who love must, in the earliest stages of affection, practice, to a certain extent, a harmless deception upon their friends, until at least their love is sanctioned. Marriages founded upon mutual attachment would be otherwise impracticable."

"No deception, dear Charles, can be harmless. I cannot forget the precepts of truth, and virtue, and obedience to a higher law even than his own will, which my dear papa taught me, and I will never more violate them, even for you."

"You are too pure, too full of truth, my beloved girl, for this world. Social life is carried on by so much dissimulation, hypocrisy, and falsehood, that you will be actually unfit to live in it."

"Then let me *die* in it sooner than be guilty of any one of them. No, dear Charles, I am not too full of truth. On the contrary, I cannot understand how it is that my love for you has plunged me into deceit. Nay more, Charles," she exclaimed, rising up, and placing her hand on her heart, "I am wrong *here*—why is it, will you tell me, that our attachment has crossed and disturbed my devotions to God. I cannot worship God as I would, and as I used to do. What if His grace be withdrawn from me? Could you love me then? Could you love a cast-a-way? No, Charles, you love truth too well to cherish affection for a being, a reprobate perhaps, and full of treachery and falsehood. I hope I am not such, but I fear sometimes that I am."

Her youthful lover gazed upon her as she stood with her sparkling eyes fixed upon vacancy. Never did she appear so beautiful; her features were kindled into an expression which was new to him—but an expression so full of high moral feeling, beaming like the very divinity of truth from her countenance, yet overshadowed by an unsettled gloom, which gave to her whole appearance the power of creating both awe and admiration in the spectator.

The boy was deeply affected, and in a voice scarcely firm, said in soothing and endearing accents, whilst he took her hand in his,

"Jane, my best beloved, and dearest—say, oh say in what manner I can compose your mind, or relieve you from the necessity of practising the deceit which troubles you so much."

"Oh," said she, bending her eye on him, "but it is sweet to be beloved by those that are dear to us. Your sympathy thrills through my whole frame with a soothing sensation inexpressibly delightful. It is sweet to me—for you, Charles, are my only confident. Dear, dear Charles, how I longed to see you, and to hear your voice."

As she made this simple but touching admission of the power of her love, she laid her head on his bosom and wept. Charles pressed her to his heart, and strove to speak, but could not—she felt his tears raining fast upon her face.

At length he said, pressing his beautiful once more to his beating bosom—"the moment, the moment that I cease to love you, may it, O God, be my last."

She rose, and quietly wiping her eyes, said—"I will go—we will meet no more—no more *in secret*."

"Oh, Jane," said her lover, "how shall I make myself worthy of you; but why," he added, "should our love be a secret? Surely it will be sanctioned by our friends. You shall not be distressed by the necessity of insincerity, although it would be wrong to call the simple concealment of your love for me by so harsh a name."

"But my papa," she said, "he is so good to me; they are all so affectionate, they love me too much; but my dear papa, I cannot stand with a stain on my conscience in his presence. Not that I fear him; but it would be treacherous and ungrateful: I would tell him all, but I cannot."

"My sweet girl, let not that distress you. Your father shall be made acquainted with it from other lips. I will disclose the secret to *my* father, and, with a proud heart, tell him of our affection."

It never once occurred to a creature so utterly unacquainted with the ways of the

world as Jane was, that Mr. Osborne might disapprove of their attachment, and prevent a boy so youthful from following the bent of his own inclinations.

"Dear Charles," said she, smiling, "what a load their approval will take off my heart. I can then have papa's pardon for my past duplicity towards him; and my mind will be so much soothed and composed. We can also meet each other with their sanction."

"My wife! my wife!" said Osborne, looking on her with a rapturous gaze of love and admiration—and carrying her allusion to the consent of their families up to the period when he might legitimately give her that title—"My wife," he exclaimed, "my young, my beautiful, my pure and unspotted wife. Heavens! and is—*is* the day surely to come when I am to call you so!"

The beautiful girl hung her head a moment as if abashed, then gliding timidly towards him, leant upon his shoulder, and putting her lips up to his ear, with a blush as much of delight as of modesty, whispered—"My husband, my husband, why should not these words, dear Charles, be as sweet a charm to *my* heart, as those you've mentioned are to yours. I would, but I cannot add—no, I will not suffer it," she exclaimed, on his attempting, in the prostration of the moment, to embrace her. "You must not presume upon the sincerity of an affectionate and ingenuous heart. Farewell, dear Charles, until we can see each other without a consciousness that we are doing wrong." Saying which, she extended her hand to him, and in a moment was on her way home.

And *was* the day to come when he could call her his? Alas! that day was never registered in the records of time.

Oh! how deeply beloved was our heroine by her family, when her moods of mind and state of spirits fixed the tone of their domestic enjoyments and almost influenced the happiness of their lives. O gentle and pure spirit, what heart cannot love thee, when those who knew thee best gathered their affections so lovingly around thee, the star of their hearth—the idol of their inner shrine—the beautiful, the meek, the affectionate, and even then, in consequence of thy transcendant charms, the far-famed Fawn of Springvale!

In the early part of that evening, Jane's spirits, equable and calm, hushed in a great measure the little domestic debate which had been held at dinner, concerning the state of her affections. The whole family partook of her cheerfulness, and her parents in particular, cast several looks of triumphant sagacity at Maria and Agnes, especially at the latter.

"Jane," said her father, in the triumph of his heart, "you are not aware that Agnes is in love."

The good-humored tone in which this was spoken, added to the utterly unsuspicious character of the innocent being to whom the words were addressed, rendered it impossible for Jane to suppose that there was any latent meaning in his observation that could be levelled at herself. In truth, there was not, for any satire it contained was directed especially to Agnes. There are tones of voice, the drift of which no effort, however forced or studied, can conceal, particularly from those who, by intimacy and observation, are acquainted with them, and with the moods of mind and shades of feeling which prompt them. Jane knew intuitively by the tone in which her father spoke—and by the expression of his countenance, that the words were not meant to apply by any direct analogy to herself. She consequently preserved her composure and replied to the question, with the same good humor in which the words were uttered.

"Agnes in love! Well, papa, and surely that is not unnatural."

"Thank you, Jane," replied Agnes. "Papa, that's a rebuff worth something; and Jane," she proceeded, anxious still to vindicate her own sagacity with respect to her sister, "suppose I should be in love, surely I may carry on an innocent intercourse with my lover, without consulting papa."

"No, Agnes, you should NOT," replied her sister, vehemently; "no intercourse—no intercourse without papa's knowledge, can be innocent. There is deceit and dissimulation in it—there is treachery in it. It is impossible to say how gloomily such an intercourse may end. Only think, my dear Agnes," she proceeded, in a low, but vehement and condensed voice—"only think, dear Agnes, what the consequences might be to you if such an attachment, and such a clandestine mode of conducting it, should in consequence of your duplicity to papa, cause the Almighty God to withdraw His grace from you, and that you should thereby become a cast-away—a cast-away! I shudder to think of it! I shudder to think of it."

"Jane, sit beside me," said Mr. Sinclair; "you are rather too hard upon poor Agnes—but, still come, and sit beside me. You are my own sweet child—my own dutiful and candid girl."

"I cannot, I cannot, papa, I *dare* not," she exclaimed, and without uttering another word she arose, and rushed out of the room. In less than a minute, however, she returned again, and approaching him, said—"Papa, forgive me, I will, I trust, soon be a better

girl than I am; bless me, and bid me good night. Mamma, bless me you too, I am your poor Jane, and I know you all love me more than you ought. Do not think that I am unhappy—do not think it. I have not been for some time so happy as I am to-night."

She then passed out of the room, and retired to her own apartment.

When she was gone, Agnes, who sat beside her father, turned to him, and leaned her head upon his breast, burst into bitter tears.

"Papa," she exclaimed, "I believe you will *now* admit that I have gained the victory. My sister's peace of mind or happiness is gone for ever. Unless Osborne either now is, or becomes in time attached to her, I know not what the consequences may be."

"It will be well for Osborne, at all events, if he has not practised upon her affections," said William; "that is, granting that the suspicion be just. But the truth is, I don't think Osborne has any thing to do with her feelings. It is merely some imaginary trifle that she has got into her foolish little head, poor girl. Don't distress yourself, father—you know she was always over-scrupulous. Even the most harmless fib that ever was told, is a crime in her eyes. I wish, for my part, she had a little wholesome wickedness about—I don't mean that sir, in a *very* unfavorable light," he said in reply to a look of severity from his father, "but I wish she had *some* leaning to error about her. She would, in one sense at least, be the better for it."

"We shall see," said his father, who evidently spoke in deep distress of mind, "we shall consider in the course of the evening what ought to be done."

"Better to take her gently," observed her mother, wiping away a tear, "gentleness and love will make her tell anything—and that there is something on her mind no one can doubt."

"I won't have her distressed, my dear," replied her father. "It cannot be of much importance I think after all—but whatever it may be, her own candid mind will give it forth spontaneously. I know my child, and will answer for her."

"Why then, papa, are you so much distressed, if you think it of no importance?" asked Maria.

"If her finger ached, it would distress me, child, and you know it."

"Why, she and Osborne have had no opportunity of being together, out of the eyes of the family," observed William.

"That's more than you know, William," said Agnes; "she has often walked out."

"But she always did so," replied her mother.

"She would never meet him privately," said her father, firmly, "of that I am certain as my life."

"That, papa," returned Agnes, "I am afraid, is precisely what she has done, and what now distresses her. And I am sure that whatever is wrong with her, no explanation will be had from herself. Though kind and affectionate as ever, she has been very shy with me and Maria of late—and indeed, has made it a point to keep aloof from us. Three or four times I spoke to her in a tone of confidence, as if I was about to introduce some secret of my own, but she always under some pretense or other left me. I had not thought of Osborne at the time, nor could I guess what troubled her—but something I saw did." Her father sighed deeply, and, clasping his hands, uttered a silent ejaculation to heaven on her behalf. "That is true," said he, "it is now the hour of evening worship; let us kneel and remember her trouble, the poor child, whatever it may be."

"Had I not better call her down, papa," said Agnes.

"Not this evening," he replied, "not this evening—she is too much disturbed, and will probably prefer praying alone."

The old man then knelt down, and after the usual form of evening worship, uttered a solemn and affecting appeal upon her behalf, to Him, who can pour balm upon the wounded spirit, and say unto the weary and heavy laden, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." But when he went on in words more particularly describing her state of mind, to mention, and plead for "their youngest," and "their dearest," and "their best beloved," his voice became tremulous, and for a moment he paused, but the pause was filled with the sobbings of those who loved her, and especially by the voice of that affectionate sister who loved her most—for of them all, Agnes only wept aloud. At length the prayer was concluded, and rising up with wet eyes, they perceived that the beloved object of their supplications had glided into the room, and joined their worship unperceived.

"Dear Jane," said her father, "we did not know you were with us."

She made no immediate reply, but, after a moment's apparent struggle, went over, and laying her head upon his bosom, sobbed out—"Papa, your love has overcome me. I will tell you all."

"Soul of truth and candor," exclaimed the old man, clasping her to his bosom, "heroic child! I knew she would do it, and I said so. Go out now, and leave us to ourselves. Darling, don't be distressed. If you feel difficulty I will not ask to hear it. Or perhaps you would rather mention it to your mamma."

"No—to you papa—to you—and you will not be harsh upon me, I am a weak girl, and have done very wrong."

It was indeed a beautiful thing to see this fair and guiltless penitent leaning against her indulgent father's bosom, in which her blushing face was hid, and disclosing the history of an attachment as pure and innocent as ever warmed the heart of youth and beauty. Oh no wonder, thou sweetest and most artless of human beings, that when the heavy blight of reason came upon thee, and thou disappearedst from his eyes, that the old man's spirit became desolate and his heart broken, and that he said after thy dissolution to every word of comfort uttered to him—"It is vain, it is vain—I cannot stay. I hear *her* voice calling me—she calls me, my beautiful—my pride—my child—my child—she calls me, and I cannot stay." Nor did he long.

To none else did her father that night reveal the purport of this singular disclosure, except to Mrs. Sinclair herself—but the next morning before breakfast, the secret had been made known to the rest. All trouble and difficulty, as to the conduct they should pursue, were removed in consequence of Osborne's intention to ask his father to sanction their attachment, and until the consequence of that step should be known, nothing further on their part could be attempted. On this point, however, they were not permitted to remain long in suspense, for ere two o'clock that day, Mr. Osborne had, in the name of his son, proposed for the hand of our fair girl, which proposal we need scarcely say was instantly and joyfully accepted. It is true, their immediate union was not contemplaled. Both were much too youthful and inexperienced to undertake the serious duties of married life, but it was arranged that Osborne, whose health, besides, was not sufficiently firm, should travel, see the world, and strengthen his constitution by the genial air of a warmer and more salubrious climate.

Alas! why is it that the sorrows of love are far sweeter than its joys? We do not mean to say that our young hero and heroine, if we may presume so to call them, were insensible to this lapse of serene delight which now opened upon them. No—the happiness they enjoyed was indeed such as few taste in such a world as this is. Their attachment was now sanctioned by all their mutual friends, and its progress was unimpeded by an scruple arising from clandestine intercourse, or a breach of duty. But, with secrecy, passed away those trembling snatches of unimaginable transport which no state of permitted love has ever yet known. The stolen glance, the passing whisper, the guarded pressure of the soft white hand timidly returned, and the fearful rapture of the hurried kiss—alas! alas!—and alas! for the memory of Eloiza!

Time passed, and the preparations necessary for Osborne's journey were in fact nearly completed. One day, about a fortnight before his departure, he and Jane were sitting in a little ozier summer-house in Mr. Sinclair's garden, engaged in a conversation more tender than usual, for each felt their love deeper and their hearts sink as the hour of separation approached them. Jane's features exhibited such a singular union of placid confidence and melancholy, as gave something Madonna-like and divine to her beauty. Osborne sat, and for a long time gazed upon her with a silent intensity of rapture for which he could find no words. At length he exclaimed in a reverie—

"I will swear it—I *may* swear it."

"Swear what, Charles?"

"That the moment I see a girl more beautiful, I will cease to write to you—I will cease to love you."

The blood instantly forsook her cheeks, and she gazed at him with wonder and dismay.

"What, dear Charles, do you mean?"

"Oh, my pride and my treasure!" he exclaimed, wildly clasping her to his bosom—"there is none so fair—none on earth or in heaven itself so beautiful—that, my own ever dearest, is my meaning."

The confidence of her timid and loving heart was instantly restored—and she said smiling, yet with a tear struggling through her eyelid, "I believe I am—I think I am beautiful. I know they call me the Fawn of Springvale, because I am gentle."

"The angels are not so gentle, nor so pure, nor so innocent as you are, my unwedded wife."

"I am glad I am," she replied; "and I am glad, too, that I am beautiful—but it is all on your account, and for your sake, dear Charles."

The fascination—the power of such innocence, and purity, and love, utterly overcame him, and he wept in transport upon her bosom.

The approach of her sisters, however, and the liveliness of Agnes, soon changed the character of their dialogue. For an hour they ran and chased each other, and played about, after which Charles took his leave of them for the evening. Jane, as usual, being the last he parted from, whispered to him, as he went—

"Charles, promise me, that in future you wont repeat—the—the words you used in the summer-house."

"What words, love?"

"You remember—about—about — what you said you might *swear*—and that, in that case, you would cease to love me."

"Why dearest, should I promise you this?"

"Because," she said, in a low, sweet whisper, "they disturb me when I think of them —a slight thing makes my heart sink."

"You are a foolish, sweet girl—but I promise you, I shall never again use them."

She bestowed on him a look and smile that were more than a sufficient compensation for this; and after again bidding him farewell, she tripped lightly into the house.

From this onward, until the day of their separation, the spirits of our young lovers were more and more overcast, and the mirthful intercourse of confident love altogether gone. Their communion was now marked by despondency and by tears, for the most part shed during their confidential interviews with each other. In company they were silent and dejected, and ever as their eyes met in long and loving glances, they could scarcely repress their grief. Sometimes, indeed, Jane on being spoken to, after a considerable silence, would attempt in vain to reply, her quivering voice and tearful eyes affording unequivocal proof of the subject which engaged her heart. Their friends, of course, endeavored to console and sustain them on both sides; and frequently succeeded in soothing them into a childlike resignation to the necessity that occasioned the dreary period of absence that lay before them. These intervals of patience, however, did not last long; the spirits of our young lovers were, indeed, disquieted within them, and the heart of each drooped under the severest of all its calamities—the pain of loss for that object which is dearest to its affections.

It was arranged that, on the day previous to Charles' departure, Osborne's family should dine at Mr. Sinclair's; for they knew that the affliction caused by their separation would render it necessary that Jane, on that occasion, should be under her own roof, and near the attention and aid of her friends. Mr. Osborne almost regretted the resolution to which he had come of sending his son to travel, for he feared that the effect of absence from the fair girl to whom he was so deeply attached, might possibly countervail the benefits arising from a more favorable climate; but as he had already engaged the services of an able and experienced tutor, who on two or three previous occasions had been over the Continent, he expected, reasonably enough, that novelty, his tutor's good sense, and the natural elasticity of youth would soon efface a sorrow in general so transient, and in due time restore him to his usual spirits. He consequently adhered to his resolution—the day of departure was fixed, and arrangements made for the lovers to separate, as we have already intimated.

Jane Sinclair, from the period when Osborne's attachment and hers was known and sanctioned by their friends, never slept a night from her beloved sister Agnes; nor had any other person living, not even Osborne himself, such an opportunity as Agnes had of registering in the record of a sisterly heart so faithful a transcript of her love.

On the night previous to their leave taking, Agnes was astonished at the coldness of her limbs, and begged her to allow additional covering to be put on the bed.

"No, dear Agnes, no; only grant me one favor—do not speak to me—leave my heart to its own sorrows—to its own misery—to its own despair; for, Agnes, I feel a presentiment that I shall never see him again."

She pressed her lips against Agnes' cheek when she had concluded, and Agnes almost started, for that lip hitherto so glowing and warm, felt hard and cold as marble.

Osborne, who for some time past had spent almost every day at Mr. Sinclair's, arrived the next morning ere the family had concluded breakfast. Jane immediately left the table, for she had tasted nothing but a cup of tea, and placing herself beside him on the sofa, looked up mournfully into his face for more than a minute; she then caught his hand, and placing it between hers, gazed upon him again, and smiled. The boy saw at once that the smile was a smile of misery, and that the agony of separation was likely to be too much for her to bear. The contrast at that moment between them both was remarkable. She pale, cold, and almost abstracted from the perception of her immediate grief; he glowing in the deep carmine of youth and apparent health—his eye as well as hers sparkling with a light which the mere beauty of early life never gives. Alas, poor things! little did they, or those to whom they were so very dear, imagine that, as they then gazed upon each other, each bore in lineaments so beautiful the symptoms of the respective maladies that were to lay them low.

"I wish, Jane, you would try and get up your spirits, love, and see and be entertaining to poor Charles, as this is the last day he is to be with you."

She looked quickly at her mother—"The *last*, mamma?"

"I mean for a while, dear, until after his return from the Continent."

She seemed relieved by this. "Oh no, not the last, Charles," she said—"Yet I know

not how it is—I know not; but sometimes, indeed, I think it is—and if it were, if it were—"

A paleness more deadly spread over her face; and with a gaze of mute and undying devotion she clasped her hands, and repeated—"if it should be the last—the *last!*"

"I did not think you were so foolish or so weak a girl, Jane," said William, "as to be so cast down, merely because Charles is taking a skip to the Continent to get a mouthful of fresh air, and back again. Why, I know them that go to the Continent four times a year to transact business—a young fellow, by the way, that has been paying his addresses to a lady for the last six or seven years. I wish you saw *them* part, as I did—merely a hearty shake of the hand—'good by, Molly, take care of yourself till I see you again;' and 'farewell, Simon, don't forget the shawl;' and the whole thing's over, and no more about it."

There was evidently something in these words that jarred upon a spirit of such natural tenderness as Jane's. While William was repeating them, her features expressed a feeling as if of much inward pain; and when he had concluded, she rose up, and seizing both his hands, said, in a tone of meek and earnest supplication:

"Oh! William dear, do not, do not—it is not consolation—it is distress."

"Dear Jane," said the good-natured brother, at once feeling his error, "pardon me, I was wrong; there is no resemblance in the cases—I only wanted to raise your spirits."

"True, William, true; I ought to thank you, and I do thank you."

Whilst this little incident took place, Mr. Sinclair came over and sat beside Charles.

"You see, my dear Charles," said he, "what a heavy task your separation from that poor girl is likely to prove. Let me beg that you will be as firm as possible, and sustain her by a cheerful play of spirits, if you can command them. Do violence to your own heart for this day for her sake."

"I will be firm, sir," said Osborne, "if I can: but if I fail—if I—look at her," he proceeded, in a choking voice, "look at her, and then ask yourself why I—I *should* be firm?"

Whilst he spoke, Jane came over, and seating herself between her father and him, said:

"Papa, you will stay with me and Charles this day, and support us. *You* know, papa, that I am but a weak, weak girl; but when I do a wrong thing, I feel very penitent—I cannot rest."

"You never did wrong, darling," said Osborne, pressing his lips to her cheek, "you never did wrong."

"Papa says I did not do *much* wrong; yet at one time I did not think so myself; but there is a thing presses upon me still. Papa," she added, turning abruptly to him, "are there not such things in this life as judgments from heaven?"

"Yes, my dear, upon the wicked who, by deep crimes, provoke the justice of the Almighty; but the ways of God are so mysterious, and the innocent so often suffer whilst the guilty escape, that we never almost hazard an opinion upon individual cases."

"But there are *cast-aways?*"

"Yes, darling; but here is Charles anxious to take you out to walk. With such a prospect of happiness and affection before you both, you ought surely to be in the best of spirits."

"Well, I can see why you evade my question," she replied; but she added abruptly, "bless us, papa, bless us." She knelt down, and pulled Charles gently upon his knees also, and joining both hands together, bent her head as if to receive the benediction.

Oh, mournful and heart-breaking was her loveliness, as she knelt down before the streaming eyes of her family—a Magdeline in beauty, without her guilt.

The old man, deeply moved by the distress of the interesting pair then bent before him, uttered a short prayer suitable to the occasion, after which he blessed them both, and again recommended them to the care of heaven, in terms of touching and beautiful simplicity. His daughter seemed relieved by this, for, after rising, she went to her mother and said:

"We are going to walk, mamma. I *must* endeavor to keep my spirits up this day, for poor Charles' sake."

"Yes, love, do," said her mother, "that's a good girl. Let me see how cheerful and sprightly you'll be; and think, dear, of the happy days that are before you and Charles yet, when you'll live in love and affection, surrounded and cherished by both your families."

"Yes, yes," said she, "I often think of that—I'll try mamma—I'll try."

Saying which, she took Charles's arm, and the young persons all went out together.

Jane's place, that evening, was by Osborne's side, as it had been with something like a faint clinging of terror during the whole day. She spoke little, and might be said rather to respond to all he uttered, than to sustain a part in the dialogue. Her distress was assuredly deep, but they knew not then, nor by any means suspected how fearful was its character in the remote and hid-

den depths of her soul. She sat with Osborne's right hand between hers, and scarcely for a moment ever took her sparkling eyes off his countenance. Many times was she observed to mutter to herself, and her lips frequently moved as if she had been speaking, but no words were uttered, nor any sense of her distress expressed. Once, only, in the course of the evening, were they startled into a hush of terror and dismay, by a single short laugh, uttered so loud and wildly, that a pause followed it, and, as if with one consentaneous movement, they all assembled about her. Their appearance, however, seemed to bring her to herself, for with her left hand she wafted them away, saying, "Leave us—leave us—this is a day of sorrow to *us*—the day will end, but when, when, alas, will the sorrow? Papa, some of us will need your prayers now—the sunshine of Jane's life is over—I am the Fawn of Springvale no more—my time with the holy and affectionate flock of whom I was and am an unworthy one, will be short—I may be with you a day, as it were, the next is come and Jane is gone for ever."

"Father," said Osborne, "I shall not go;" and as he spoke he pressed her to his bosom —"I will never leave her."

The boy's tears fell rapidly upon her pale cheeks, and on feeling them she looked up and smiled.

The sobbings of the family were loud, and bitter were the tears which the tender position of the young and beautiful pair wrung from the eyes that looked upon them.

"Your health, my boy," said his father, "my beautiful and only boy, render it necessary that you should go. It is but for a time, Jane dear, my daughter, my boy's beloved, it is only for a time—let him leave you for a little, and he will return confirmed in health and knowledge, and worthy my dear, dear girl, to be yours for ever."

"My daughter," said Mr. Sinclair, "was once good and obedient, and she will now do whatever is her own papa's wish."

"Name it, papa, name it," said she, still smiling.

"Suffer Charles to go, my darling—and do not—oh! do not take his departure so much to heart."

"Charles, you must go," said she. "It is the wish of your own father and of mine—but above all, it is the wish of your own—you cannot, you must not gainsay him. What love can prosper which is founded on disobedience or deceit? You know the words you once loved so well to repeat—I will repeat them now—you must, you will not surely refuse the request of *your own Jane Sinclair.*"

The boy seemed for some time irresolute, but at length he clasped her in his arms, and, again, said, in a vehement burst of tenderness:

"No, father, my heart is resolved, I will never leave her. It will kill me, it will lay me in an early grave, and you will have no son to look upon."

"But you will see the heroic example that Jane will set you," said Mr. Sinclair, "she will shame you into firmness, for she will now take leave of you at once; and see then if you love her as you say you do, whether you will not respect her so far as to follow her example. Jane, bid Charles farewell."

This was, perhaps, pressing her strength too far; at all events, the injunction came so unexpectedly, that a pause followed it, and they waited with painful expectation to see what she would do. For upwards of a minute she sat silent, and her lips moved as if she were communing with herself. At length she rose up, and stooping down kissed her lover's cheek, then, taking his hand as before between hers, she said in a voice astonishingly calm:

"Charles, farewell—remember that I am your Jane Sinclair. Alas!" she added, "I am weak and feeble—help me out of the room."

Both her parents assisted her to leave it, but, on reaching the door, she drew back involuntarily, on hearing Osborne's struggles to detain her.

"Papa," she said, with a look inexpressibly wobegone and suppliant—"Mamma!"

"Sweet child, what is it?" said both.

"Let me take one last look of him—it will be the last—but not—I—I trust, the last act of my duty to you both."

She turned round and gazed upon him for some time—her features, as she looked, dilated into an expression of delight.

"Is he not," said she, in a low placid whisper, while her smiling eye still rested upon him—"is he not beautiful? Oh! yes, he is beautiful—he is beautiful."

"He is, darling—he is," said both—"come away now—be only a good firm girl and all will soon be well."

"Very, *very* beautiful," said she, in a low contented voice, as without any further wish to remain, she accompanied her parents to another room.

Such was their leaving-taking—thus did they separate. Did they ever meet!

ART III.

In the history of the affections we know that circumstances sometimes occur, where duty and inclination maintain a conflict so

nicely balanced as to render it judicious not to exact a fulfillment of the former, lest by deranging the structure of our moral feelings, we render the mind either insensible to their existence, or incapable of regulating them. This observation applies only to those subordinate positions of life which involve no great principle of conduct, and violate no cardinal point of human duty. We ought neither to do evil nor suffer evil to be done, where our authority can prevent it, in order that good may follow. But in matters where our own will creates the offence, it is in some peculiar cases not only prudent but necessary to avoid straining a mind naturally delicate, beyond the powers which we know it to possess. We think, for instance, that it was wrong in Mr. Sinclair, at a moment when the act of separating from Osborne might have touched the feelings of his daughter into that softness which lightens and relieves the heart, abruptly to suppress emotions so natural, by exacting a proof of obedience too severe and oppressive to the heart of one who loved as Jane did. She knew it was her duty to obey him the moment he expressed his wish; but he was bound by no duty to demand such an unnecessary proof of her obedience. The immediate consequences, however, made him sufficiently sensible of his error, and taught him that a knowledge of the human heart is the most difficult task which a parent has to learn.

Jane, conducted by her parents, having reached another apartment, sat down—her father taking a chair on one side, and her mother on the other.

"My darling," said Mr. Sinclair, "I will never forget this proof of your obedience to me, on so trying an occasion. I knew I might rely upon my daughter."

Jane made no reply to this, but sat apparently wrapped up in an ecstacy of calm and unbroken delight. The smile of happiness with which she contemplated Osborne, on taking her last look of him, was still upon her face, and contrasted so strongly with the agony which they knew she must have felt, that her parents, each from an apprehension of alarming the other, feared openly to allude to it, although they felt their hearts sink in dismay and terror.

"Jane, why do you not speak to your papa and me?" said her mother; "speak to us, love, speak to us—if it was only one word."

She appeared not to hear this, nor to be at all affected by her mother's voice or words. After the latter spoke she smiled again, and immediately putting up her long white fingers through the ringlets that shaded her cheek, she pulled them down as one would do who felt anxious to take out the curls—pressing them with slight convulsive energy as they passed through her fingers.

"Henry, dear, what—what is the matter with her?" inquired her mother, whose face became pale with alarm. "Oh! what is wrong with my child!—she does not know us!—Gracious heaven, what is this!"

"Jane, my love, wont you speak to your papa?" said Mr. Sinclair. "Speak to me, my darling,—it is I,—it is your own papa that asks you?"

She looked up, and seemed for a moment struggling to recover a consciousness of her situation; but it passed away, and the scarcely perceptible meaning which began almost to become visible in her eye, was again succeeded by that smile which they both so much dreaded to see."

The old man shook his head, and looked with a brow darkened by sorrow, first upon his daughter, and afterwards upon his wife.

"My heart's delight," he exclaimed, "I fear I have demanded more from your obedience than you could perform without danger to yourself. I wish I had allowed her grief to flow, and not required such an abrupt and unseasonable proof of her duty. It was too severe an injunction to a creature so mild and affectionate,—and would to God that I had not sought it!"

"Would to heaven that you had not, my dear Henry. Let us try, however, and move her heart,—if tears could come she would be relieved."

"Bring Agnes in," said her father, "bring in Agnes,—*she* may succeed better with her than we can,—and if Charles be not already gone, there is no use in distressing him by at all alluding to her situation. She is only overpowered, I trust, and will soon recover."

The mother, on her way to bring Agnes to her sister, met the rest of the family returning to the house after having taken leave of Osborne. The two girls were weeping, for they looked upon him as already a brother; whilst William, in a good-humored tone, bantered them for the want of firmness.

"I think, mother," said he, "they are all in love with him, if they would admit it. Why here's Maria and Agnes, and I dare say they're making as great a rout about him as Jane herself! But bless me! what's the matter, mother, that you look so pale and full of alarm?"

"It's Jane—it's Jane," said Agnes. "Mother, there's something wrong!" and as she spoke she stopped, with uplifted hands, apparently fastened to the earth.

"My poor child!" exclaimed her mother, —"for heaven's sake come in, Agnes. Oh, heaven grant that it may soon pass away.

Agnes, dear girl, you know her best—come in quick; her papa wants you to try what you can do with her."

In a moment this loving family, with pale faces and beating hearts, stood in a circle about their affectionate and beautiful sister. Jane sat with her passive hand tenderly pressed between her father's,—smiling; but whether in unconscious happiness or unconscious misery, who alas! can say?

"You see she knows none of us,' said her mother. "Neither her papa nor me. Speak to her each of you, in turn. Perhaps you may be more successful. Agnes,—"

"She will know me," replied Agnes; "I am certain she will know me:"—and the delightful girl spoke with an energy that was based upon the confidence of that love which subsisted between them. Maria and her brother both burst into tears; but Agnes's affection rose above the mood of ordinary grief. The confidence that her beloved sister's tenderness for her would enable her to touch a chord in a heart so utterly her own as Jane's was, assumed upon this occasion the character of a wild but mournful enthusiasm, that was much more expressive of her attachment than could be the loudest and most vehement sorrow.

"If she could but shed tears," said her mother, wringing her hands.

"She will," returned Agnes, "she will. Jane," she exclaimed, "Jane, don't you know your own Agnes?—your own Agnes, Jane?"

The family waited in silence for half a minute, but their beloved one smiled on, and gave not the slightest token of recognizing either Agnes's person or her voice. Sometimes her lips moved, and she appeared to be repeating certain words to herself, but in a voice so low and indistinct that no one could catch them.

Agnes's enthusiasm abandoned her on seeing that that voice to which her own dearest sister ever sweetly and lovingly responded, fell upon her ear as an idle and unmeaning sound. Her face became deadly pale, and her lip quivered, as she again addressed the unconscious girl. Once more she took her hand in hers, and placing herself before her, put her fingers to her cheek in order to arrest her attention.

"Jane, look upon me; look upon me;—that's a sweet child,—look upon me. Sure I am Agnes—your own Agnes, who will break her heart if my sweet sister doesn't speak to her."

The stricken one raised her head, and looked into her face; but it was, alas! too apparent that she saw her not; for the eye, though smiling, was still vacant. Again her lips moved, and she spoke so as to be understood; turning her eyes at the same time towards the door through which she had entered.

"Yes," she exclaimed, in the same low, placid voice, "yes, he is beautiful! Is he not beautiful? Fatal beauty!—fatal beauty! It is a fatal thing—it is a fatal thing!—but he is very, very beautiful!"

"Jane," said Maria, taking her hand from Agnes's, "Jane, speak to Maria, dear. Am not I, too, your own Maria? that loves you not less than—my darling, darling child—they do not live that love you better than your own Maria;—in pity, darling, in pity speak to me!"

The only reply was a smile, that rose into the murmuring music of a low laugh; but this soon ceased, her countenance became troubled, and her finely-pencilled brows knit, as if with an inward sense of physical pain. William, her father, her mother, each successively addressed her, but to no purpose. Though a slight change had taken place, they could not succeed in awakening her reason to a perception of the circumstances in which she was placed. They only saw that the unity of her thought, or of the image whose beauty veiled the faculties of her mind was broken, and that some other memory, painful in its nature, had come in to disturb the serenity of her unreal happiness; but this, which ought to have given them hope, only alarmed them the more. The father, while these tender and affecting experiments were tried, sat beside her, his eyes laboring under a weight of deep and indescribable calamity, and turning from her face to the faces of those who attempted to recall her reason, with a mute vehemence of sorrow which called up from the depths of their sister's misery a feeling of compassion for the old man whom *she* had so devotedly loved.

"My father's heart is breaking," said William, groaning aloud, and covering his face with his hands. "Father, your face frightens me more than Jane's;—don't, father, don't. She is young,—it will pass away—and father dear where is your reliance upon her—upon her aid!"

"Dear Henry," said his wife, "you should be our support. It is the business of your life to comfort and sustain the afflicted."

"Papa," said Agnes, "come with me for a few minutes, until you recover the shock which—which——"

She stopped, and dropping her head upon the knees of her smiling and apparently happy sister, wept aloud.

"Agnes—Agnes," said William, (they were all in tears except her father) "Agnes, I am ashamed of you;"—yet his own cheeks were wet, and his voice faltered. "Father, come

with me for a little. You will, when alone for a few minutes, bethink you of your duty —for it *is* your duty to bear this not only as becomes a Christian man, but a Christian minister, who is bound to give us example as well as precept."

"I know it, William, I know it;—and you shall witness my fortitude, my patience, my resignation under this—this——. I will retire. But *is* she not—alas! I should say, was she not my youngest and my dearest! You admit yourselves she was the *best*."

"Father, come," said William.

"Dear father—dear papa, go with him," said Agnes.

"My father," said Maria, "as he said to *her*, will be himself."

"I will go," said the old man; "I know how to be firm; I will reflect; I will pray; I will weep. I must, I must——"

He pressed the beautiful creature to his bosom, kissed her lips, and as he hung over her, his tears fell in torrents upon her cheeks.

Oh! what a charm must be in sympathy, and in the tears which it sheds over the afflicted, when those of the grey-haired father could soothe his daughter's soul into that sorrow which is so often a relief to the miserable and disconsolate!

When Jane first felt his tears upon her cheeks, she started slightly, and the smile departed from her countenance. As he pressed her to his heart she struggled a little, and putting her arms out, she turned up her eyes upon his face, and after a long struggle between memory and insanity, at length whispered out "papa!"

"You are with me, darling," he exclaimed; "and I am with you, too: and here we are all about you,—your mother, and Agnes, and all."

"Yes, yes," she replied; "but papa,—and where is my mamma?"

"I am here, my own love; here I am. Jane, collect yourself, my treasure. You are overcome with sorrow. The parting from Charles Osborne has been too much for you."

"Perhaps it was wrong to mention his name," whispered William. "May it not occasion a relapse, mother?"

"No," she replied. "I want to touch her heart, and get her to weep if possible."

Her daughter's fingers were again involved in the tangles of her beautiful ringlets, and once more was the sweet but vacant smile returning to her lips.

"May God relieve her and us," said Maria; "the darling child *is* relapsing!"

Agnes felt so utterly overcome, that she stooped, and throwing her arms around her neck wept aloud, with her cheek laid to Jane's.

Again the warmth of her tears upon the afflicted one's face seemed to soothe or awaken her. She looked up, and with a troubled face exclaimed:—

"I hope I am not!—Agnes, you are good, and never practised deceit,—am I? am I?"

"Are you what, love? are you what, Jane, darling?"

"Am I a cast-away? I thought I was. I believe I am—Agnes?"

"Well, dear girl!"

"I am afraid of my papa."

"Why, Jane, should you be afraid of papa. Sure you know how he loves you—dotes upon you?"

"Because I practised deceit upon him. I dissembled to him. I sinned, sinned deeply; —blackly, blackly. I shudder to think of it;" and she shuddered while speaking.

"Well, but Jane dear," said her mother, soothingly, "can you not weep for your fault. Tears of repentance can wipe out any crime. Weep, my child, weep, and it will relieve your heart."

"I would like to see my papa," she replied. "I should be glad to hear that he forgives me: how glad! how glad! That's all that troubles your poor Jane; all in the world that troubles her poor heart—I think."

These words were uttered in a tone of such deep and inexpressible misery, and with such an innocent and childlike unconsciousness of the calamity which weighed her down, that no heart possessing common humanity could avoid being overcome.

"Look on me, love," exclaimed her father. "Your papa is here, ready to pity and forgive you."

"William," said Agnes, "a thought strikes me,—the air that Charles played when they first met has been her favorite ever since you know it—go get your flute and play it with as much feeling as you can."

Jane made no reply to her father's words. She sat musing, and once or twice put up her hand to her sidelocks, but immediately withdrew it, and again fell into a reverie. Sometimes her face brightened into the fatal smile, and again became overshadowed with a gloom that seemed to proceed from a feeling of natural grief. Indeed the play of meaning and insanity, as they chased each other over a countenance so beautiful, was an awful sight, even to an indifferent beholder, much less to those who then stood about her.

William in about a minute returned with his flute, and placing himself behind her, commenced the air in a spirit more mournful probably than any in which it had ever before been played. For a long time she noticed it not: that is to say, she betrayed

no external marks of attention to it. They could perceive, however, that although she neither moved nor looked around her, yet the awful play of her features ceased, and their expression became more intelligent and natural. At length she sighed deeply several times, though without appearing to hear the music; and at length, without uttering a word to any one of them, she laid her head upon her father's bosom, and the tears fell in placid torrents down her cheeks. By a signal from his hand, Mr. Sinclair intimated that for the present they should be silent; and by another addressed to William, that he should play on. He did so, and she wept copiously under the influence of that charmed melody for more than twenty minutes.

"It would be well for me," she at length said, "that is, I fear it would, that I had never heard that air, or seen him who first sent its melancholy music to my heart. He is gone; but when—when will he return?"

"Do not take his departure so heavily, dear child," said her father. "If you were acquainted with life and the world you would know that a journey to the Continent is nothing. Two years to one as young as you are will soon pass."

"It would, papa, if I loved him less. But my love for him—my love for him—*that* now is my misery. I must, however, rely upon other strength than my own. Papa, kneel down and pray for me,—and you, mamma, and all of you; for I fear I am myself incapable of praying as I used to do, with an undivided heart."

Her father knelt down, but knowing her weak state of mind, he made his supplication as short and simple as might be consistent with the discharge of a duty so solemn.

"Now," said she, when it was concluded, "will you, mamma, and Agnes, help me to bed; I am very much exhausted, and my heart is sunk as if it were never to beat lightly again. It may yet; I would hope it,—hope it if I could."

They allowed her her own way, and without any allusion whatsoever to Charles, or his departure, more than she had made herself, they embraced her; and in a few minutes she was in bed, and as was soon evident to Agnes, who watched her, in a sound sleep.

Why is it that those who are dear to us are more tenderly dear to us while asleep than while awake? It is indeed difficult to say; but we know that there are many things in life and nature, especially in the heart and affections, which we feel as distinct truths, without being able to satisfy ourselves why they are so. This is one of them. What parent does not love the offspring more glowingly while the features are composed in sleep? What young husband does not feel his heart melt with a warmer emotion, on contemplating the countenance of his youthful wife, when that countenance is overshadowed with the placid but somewhat mournful beauty of repose?

When the family understood from Agnes that Jane had fallen into a slumber, they stole up quietly, and standing about her, each looked upon her with a long gaze of relief and satisfaction; for they knew that sleep would repair the injury which the trial of that day had wrought upon a mind so delicately framed as her's. We question not but where there is beauty it is still more beautiful in sleep. The passions are then at rest, and the still harmony of the countenance unbroken by the jarring discords and vexations of waking life; every feature then falls into its natural place, and renders the symmetry of the face chaster, whilst its general expression breathes more of that tender and pensive character, which constitutes the highest order of beauty.

Jane's countenance, in itself so exquisitely lovely, was now an object of deep and melancholy interest. Upon it might be observed faint traces of those contending emotions whose struggle had been on that day so nearly fatal to her mind for ever. The smile left behind it a faint and dying light, like the dim radiance of a spring evening when melting into dusk;—whilst the secret dread of becoming a cast-away, and the still abiding consciousness of having deceived her father, blended into the languid serenity of her face a slight expression of the pain they had occasioned her while awake.

Unhappy girl! There she lay in her innocence and beauty like a summer lake whose clear waters have settled into stillness after a recent storm; reflecting, as they pass, the clouds now softened into milder forms, which had but a little time before so deeply agitated them.

"Oh, no wonder," said her father, "that the boy who loves her should say he would not leave her, and that separation would break down the strength of his heart and spirit. A fairer thing—a purer being never closed her eyelids upon the cares and trials of life. Light may those cares be, oh! beloved of our hearts; and refreshing the slumbers that are upon you; and may the blessing and merciful providence of God guard and keep you from evil! Amen! Amen!"

Maria on this occasion was deeply affected Jane's arm lay outside the coverlid, and her sister observed that her white and beautiful fingers were affected from time to time with slight starting twitches, apparently nervous.

This, contrasted with the stillness of her face, impressed the girl with an apprehension that the young mourner, though asleep, was still suffering pain; but when her father spoke and blessed her, she felt her heart getting full, and bending over Jane she imprinted a kiss upon her cheek;—affectionate, indeed, was that kiss, but timid and light as the fall of the thistle-down upon a leaf of the rose or the lily. When she withdrew her lips, a tear was visible on the cheek of the sleeper—a circumstance which, slight as it was, gave a character of inexpressible love and tenderness to the act. They then quietly left her, with the exception of Agnes, and all were relieved and delighted at seeing her enjoy a slumber so sound and refreshing.

The next morning they arose earlier than usual, in order to watch the mood in which she might awake; and when Agnes, who had been her bed-fellow, came down stairs, every eye was turned upon her with an anxiety proportioned to the disastrous consequences that might result from any unfavorable turn in her state of feeling.

"Agnes," said her father, "how is she?—in what state?—in what frame of mind?"

"She appears much distressed, papa—feels conscious that Charles is gone—but as yet has made no allusion to their parting yesterday. Indeed I do not think she remembers it. She is already up, and begged this moment of me to leave her to herself for a little."

"'I want strength, Agnes,' said she, 'and I know there is but one source from which I can obtain it. Advice, consolation, and sympathy, I may and will receive here; but strength—strength is what I most stand in need of, and that only can proceed from Him who gives rest to the heavy laden.'

"'You feel too deeply, Jane,' I replied; 'you should try to be firm.'

"'I do try, Agnes; but tell me, have I not been unwell, *very* unwell?'

"'Your feelings, dear Jane, overcame you yesterday, as was natural they should—but now that you are calm, of course you will not yield to despondency or melancholy. Your dejection, though at present deep, will soon pass away, and ere many days you will be as cheerful as ever.'

"'I hope so; but Charles is gone, is he not?'

"'But you know it was necessary that he should travel for his health; besides, have you not formed a plan of correspondence with each other?'

"Then," proceeded Agnes, "she pulled out the locket which contained his hair, and after looking on it for about a minute, she kissed it, pressed it to her heart, and whilst in the act of doing so, a few tears ran down her cheeks."

"I am glad of that," observed her mother; "it is a sign that this heavy grief will not long abide upon her."

"She then desired me," continued Agnes, "to leave her, and expressed a sense of her own weakness, and the necessity of spiritual support, as I have already told you. I am sure the worst is over."

"Blessed be God, I trust it is," said her father; "but whilst *I* live, I will never demand from her such a proof of her obedience as that which I imposed upon her yesterday. She will soon be down to breakfast, and we must treat the dear girl kindly, and gently, and affectionately; tenderly, tenderly must she be treated; and, children, much depends upon you—keep her mind engaged. You have music—play more than you do—read more—walk more—sing more. I myself will commence a short course of lectures upon the duties and character of women, in the single and married state of life; alternately with which I will also give you a short course upon *Belles-Lettres*. If this engages and relieves her mind, it will answer an important purpose; but at all events it will be time well spent, and that is something."

When Jane appeared at breakfast, she was paler than usual; but then the expression of her countenance, though pensive, was natural. Mr. Sinclair placed her between himself and her mother, and each kissed her in silence ere she sat down.

"I have been very unwell yesterday, papa. I know I must have been; but I have made my mind up to bear his absence with fortitude—not that it is his mere absence which I feel so severely, but an impression that some calamity is to occur either to him or me."

"Impressions of that kind, my dear child, are the results of low spirits and a nervous habit. You should not suffer your mind to be disturbed by them; for, when it is weakened by suffering, they gather strength, and sometimes become formidable."

"There is no bearing my calamity, papa, as it ought to be borne, without the grace of God, and you know we must pray to be made worthy of that. I dare say that if I am resigned and submissive that my usual cheerfulness will gradually return. I have confidence in heaven, papa, but none in my own strength, or I should rather say in my own weakness. My attachment to Charles resembles a disease more than a healthy and rational passion. I know it is excessive, and I indeed think its excess *is* a disease. Yet it is singular I do not fear my heart, papa, but I do my head; here is where the danger lies—here—here;" and as she spoke, she applied her

hand to her forehead, and gave a faint smile of melancholy apprehension.

"Wait, Jane," said her brother; "just wait for a week or ten days, and if you don't scold yourself for being now so childish, why never call me brother again. Sure I understand these things like a philosopher. I have been three times in love myself."

Jane looked at him, and a faint sparkle of her usual good nature lit up her countenance.

"Didn't I tell you," he proceeded, addressing them—"look; why I'll soon have her as merry as a kid."

"But who were you in love with, William," asked Agnes.

"I was smitten first with Kate Sharp, the Applewoman, in consideration of her charming method of giving me credit for fruit when I was a school-boy, and had no money. I thought her a very interesting woman, I assure you, and proferred my suit to her with signal success. I say *signal*, for you know she was then, as she is now, very hard of hearing, and I was forced to pay my suit to her by signs."

"Dear William," said she, "I see your motive, and love you for it; but it is too soon—my spirits are not yet in tone for mirth or pleasantry—but they will be—they will be. I know it is too bad to permit an affliction that is merely sentimental to bear me down in this manner; but I cannot help it, and you must all only look on me as a weak, foolish girl, and forgive me, and pity me. Mamma, I will lie down again, for I feel I am not well; and oh, papa, if you ever prayed with fervor and sincerity, pray for strength to your own Jane, and happiness to her stricken heart."

She then retired, and for the remainder of that day confined herself partly to her bed, and altogether to her chamber; and it was observed, that from the innocent caprices of a sickly spirit, she called Agnes, and her mother, and Maria—sometimes one, and sometimes another—and had them always about her, each to hear a particular observation that occurred to her, or to ask some simple question, of no importance to any person except to one whose mind had become too sensitive upon the subject which altogether engrossed it. Towards evening she had a long fit of weeping, after which she appeared more calm and resigned. She made her mother read her a chapter in the Bible, and expressed a resolution to bear every thing she said, as became one she hoped not *yet* beyond the reach of Divine grace and Christian consolation.

After a second night's sleep she arose considerably relieved from the gloomy grief which had nearly wrought such a dreadful change in her intellect. Her father's plan of imperceptibly engaging her attention by instruction and amusement was carried into effect by him and her sisters, with such singular success, that at the lapse of a month she was almost restored to her wonted spirits. We say almost, because it was observed that, notwithstanding her apparent serenity, she never afterwards reached the same degree of cheerfulness, nor so richly exhibited in her complexion that purple glow, the hue of which lies like a visible charm upon the cheek of youthful beauty.

Time, however, is the best philosopher, and our heroine found that ere many weeks she could, with the exception of slight intervals, look back upon the day of separation from Osborne, and forward to the expectation of his return, with a calmness of spirit by no means unpleasing to one who had placed such unlimited confidence in his affection. His first letter soothed, relieved, transported her. Indeed, so completely was she overcome on receiving it, that the moment it was placed in her hands, her eyes seemed to have been changed into light, her limbs trembled with the agitation of a happiness so intense; and she at length sank into an ecstacy of joy, which was only relieved by a copious flood of tears.

For two years after this their correspondence was as regular as the uncertain motions of a tourist could permit it. Jane appeared to be happy, and she was so within the limits of an enjoyment, narrowed in its character by the contingency arising from time and distance, and the other probabilities of disappointment which a timid heart and a pensive fancy will too often shape into certainty. Fits of musing and melancholy she often had without any apparent cause, and when gently taken to task, or remonstrated with concerning them, she had only replied by weeping, or admitted that she could by no means account for her depression, except by saying that she believed it to be a defect in the habit and temper of her mind.

His tutor's letters, both to Charles's father and hers, were nearly as welcome to Jane as his own. He, in fact, could say that for his pupil, which his pupil's modesty would not permit him to say for himself. Oh! how her heart glowed, and conscious pride sparkled in her eye, when that worthy man described the character of manly beauty which time and travel had gradually given to his person! And when his progress in knowledge and accomplishments, and the development of his taste and judgment became the theme of his tutor's panegyric, she could not listen without betraying the vehement enthusiasm

of a passion, which absence and time had only strengthened in her bosom.

These letters induced a series of sensations at once novel and delightful, and such as were calculated to give zest to an attachment thus left to support itself, not from the presence of its object, but from the memory of tenderness that had already gone by. She knew Charles Osborne only as a boy—a beautiful boy it is true—and he knew her only as a graceful creature, whose extremely youthful appearance made it difficult whether to consider her merely as an advanced girl, or as a young female who had just passed into the first stage of womanhood. But now her fancy and affection had both room to indulge in that vivacious play which delights to paint a lover absent under such circumstances in the richest hues of imaginary beauty.

"How will he look," she would say to her sister Agnes, "when he returns a young man, settled into the fulness of his growth? Taller he will be, and much more manly in his deportment. But is there no danger, Agnes, of his losing in grace, in delicacy of complexion, in short, of losing in beauty what he may gain otherwise?"

"No, my dear, not in the least; you will be ten times prouder of him after his return than you ever were. There is something much more noble and dignified in the love of a man than in that of a boy, and you will feel this on seeing him."

"In that case, Agnes, I shall have to fall in love with him over again, and to fall in love with the same individual twice, will certainly be rather a novel case—a double passion, at least, you will grant, Agnes."

"But *he* will experience sensations quite as singular on seeing you, when he returns. You are as much changed—improved I mean—in your person, as he can be for his life. If he is now a fine, full-grown young man, you are a tall, elegant—I don't want to flatter you, Jane,—I need not say graceful, for *that* you always were, but I may add with truth, a majestic young woman. Why, you will scarcely know each other."

"You *do* flatter me, Agnes; but am I *so much* improved?"

"Indeed you are quite a different girl from what you were when he saw you."

"I am glad of it; but as I told him once, it is on his account that I *am* so glad; do you know, Agnes, I never was vain of my beauty until I saw Charles?"

"Did you ever feel proud in being beautiful in the eyes of another, Jane?"

"No, I never did—why should I?"

"Well, that is not vanity—it is only love visible in a different aspect, and not the least amiable either, my dear."

"Well, I should be much more melancholy than I am, were not my fancy so often engaged in picturing to myself the change which may be on him when he returns. The feeling it occasions is novel and agreeable, sometimes, indeed, delightful, and so far sustains me when I am inclined to be gloomy. But believe me, Agnes, I could love Charles Osborne even if he were not handsome. I could love him for his mind, his principles, and especially for his faithful and constant heart."

"And for all these he would deserve your love; but you remember what you told me once: it seems he has not yet seen a girl that *he* thinks more handsome than you are. Did you not mention to me that he said when he did, he would cease to write to you and cease to love you? You see he *is* constant."

"Yes; but did I not tell you the sense in which he meant it?"

"Yes; and now you throw a glance at yourself in the glass! Oh Jane, Jane, the best of us and the freest from imperfection is not without a little pride and vanity; but don't be too confident, my saucy beauty; consider that you complained to William yesterday, about the unusual length of time that has elapsed since you received his last letter, and yet he could write to his fa—— What, what, dear girl, what's the matter? you are as pale as death."

"Because, Agnes, I never think of that but my heart and spirits sink. It has been one of the secret causes of my occasional depressions ever since he went. I cannot tell why, but from the moment the words were spoken, I have not been without a presentiment of evil."

"Even upon your own showing, Jane, that is an idle and groundless impression, and unworthy the affection which you know, and which we all know he bears you; dismiss it, dear Jane, dismiss it, and do not give yourself the habit of creating imaginary evils."

"I know I am prone to such a habit, and am probably too much of a visionary for my own happiness; but setting that gloomy presentiment aside, have you not, Agnes, been struck with several hints in his letters, both to me and his father, unfavorable to the state of his health."

"That you will allow, could not be very ill, when he was able to continue his travels."

"True, but according to his own admission his arrangements were frequently broken up, by the fact of his being 'unwell,' and 'not in a condition to travel,' and so did not reach the places in time to which he had requested me to direct many of my letters. I fear, Agnes, that his health has not been so much

improved by the air of the Continent as we hoped it would."

"I have only to say this, Jane, that if he does not appreciate your affection as he ought to do, then God forgive him. He will be guilty of a crime against the purest attachment of the best of hearts, as well as against truth and honor. I hope he may be worthy of you, and I am sure he will. He is now in Bath, however, and will soon be with us."

"I am divided, Agnes, by two principles —if they may be called such—or if you will, by two moods of mind, or states of feeling; one of them is faith and trust in his affection —how can I doubt it?—the other is my malady, I believe, a gloom, an occasional despondency for which I cannot account, and which I am not able to shake off. My faith and trust, however, will last, and his return will dispel the other."

This, in fact, was the true state of the faithful girl's heart. From the moment Osborne went to travel, her affection, though full of the tenderest enthusiasm, lay under the deep shadow of that gloom, which was occasioned by the first, and we may say the only act of insincerity she was ever guilty of towards her father. The reader knows that even this act was not a deliberate one, but merely the hurried evasion of a young and bashful girl, who, had her sense of moral delicacy been less acute, might have never bestowed a moment's subsequent consideration upon it. Let our fair young readers, however, be warned even by this very slight deviation from truth, and let them also remember that one act of dissimulation may, in the little world of their own moral sentiments and affections, lay the foundation for calamities under which their hopes and their happiness in consequence of that act may absolutely perish. Still are we bound to say that Jane's deportment during the period stipulated upon for Osborne's absence was admirably decorous, and replete with moral beauty. Her moments of enjoyment derived from his letters, were fraught with an innocent simplicity of delight in fine keeping with a heart so full of youthful fervor and attachment. And when her imagination became occasionally darkened by that *gloom* which she termed her malady, nothing could be more impressive than the tone of deep and touching piety which mingled with and elevated her melancholy into a cheerful solemnity of spirit, that swayed by its pensive dignity the habits and affections of her whole family.

'Tis true she was one of a class rarely to be found among even the highest of her own sex, and her attachment was consequently that of a heart utterly incapable of loving twice. Her first affection was too steadfast and decisive ever to be changed, and at the same time too full and unreserved to maintain the materials for a second passion. The impression she received was too deep ever to be erased. She might weep—she might mourn—she might sink—her soul might be bowed down to the dust—her heart might break—she might die—but she never, never, could love again. That heart was his palace, where the monarch of her affections reigned —but remove his throne, and it became the sepulchre of her own hopes—the ruin, haunted by the moping brood of her own sorrows. Often, indeed, did her family wonder at the freshness of memory manifested in the character of her love for Osborne. There was nothing transient, nothing forgotten, nothing perishable in her devotion to him. In truth, it had something of divinity in it. Every thing past, and much also of the future was present to her. Osborne breathed and lived at the expiration of two years, just as he had done the day before he set out on his travels. In her heart he existed as an undying principle, and the duration of her love for him seemed likely to be limited only by those laws of nature, which, in the course of time, carry the heart beyond the memory of all human affections.

It would, indeed, be almost impossible to see a creature so lovely and angelic as was our heroine, about the period when Osborne was expected to return. Retaining all the graceful elasticity of motion that characterized her when first introduced to our readers, she was now taller and more majestic in her person, rounder and with more symmetry in her figure, and also more conspicuous for the singular ease and harmony of her general deportment. Her hair, too, now grown to greater luxuriance, had become several shades deeper, and, of course, was much more rich than when Charles saw it last. But if there was any thing that, more than another, gave an expression of tenderness to her beauty, it was the under-tone of color—the slightly perceptible paleness which marked her complexion as that of a person whose heart though young had already been made acquainted with some early sorrow.

Had her lover then seen her, and witnessed the growth of charms that had taken place during his absence, he and she might both, alas, have experienced another and a kinder destiny.

The time at length arrived when Charles, as had been settled upon by both their parents, was expected to return. During the three months previous he had been at Bath, accompanied of course by his friend and tutor. Up until a short time previous to his

arrival there, his communications to his parents and to Jane were not only punctual and regular, but remarkable for the earnest spirit of dutiful affection and fervid attachment which they breathed to both. It is true that his father had, during the whole period of his absence, been cognizant of that which the vigilance of Jane's love for him only suspected—I allude to the state of his health, which it seems occasionally betrayed symptoms of his hereditary complaint.

This gave Mr. Osborne deep concern, for he had hoped that so long a residence in more genial climates would have gradually removed from his son's constitution that tendency to decline which was so much dreaded by them all. Still he was gratified to hear, that with the exception of those slight recurrences, the boy grew fast and otherwise with a healthy energy into manhood. The principles he had set out with were unimpaired by the influence of continental profligacy. His mind was enlarged, his knowledge greatly extended, and his taste and manners polished to a degree so unusual, that he soon became the ornament of every circle in which he moved. His talents, now ripe and cultivated, were not only of a high, but also of a striking and brilliant character—much too commanding and powerful, as every one said, to be permitted to sink into the obscurity of private life.

This language was not without its due impression on young Osborne's mind; for his tutor could observe that soon after his return to England he began to have fits of musing, and was often abstracted, if not absolutely gloomy. He could also perceive a disinclination to write home, for which he felt it impossible to account. At first he attributed this to ill health, or to those natural depressions which frequently precede or accompany it; but at length on seeing his habitual absences increase, he inquired in a tone of friendly sympathy, too sincere to be doubted, why it was that a change so unusual had become so remarkably visible in his spirits.

"I knew not," replied Osborne, "that it was so; I myself have not observed what you speak of."

"Your manner, indeed, is much changed," said his friend; "you appear to me, and I dare say to others, very like a man whose mind is engaged upon the consideration of some subject that is deeply painful to him, and of which he knows not how to dispose. If it be so, my dear Osborne, command my advice, my sympathy, my friendship."

"I assure you, my dear friend, I was perfectly unconscious of this. But that I *have* for some time past been thinking more seriously than usual of the position in society which I ought to select, I grant you. You are pleased to flatter me with the possession of talents that you say might enable any man to reach a commanding station in public life. Now, for what purpose are talents given? or am I justified in slinking away into obscurity when I might create my own fortune, perhaps my own rank, by rendering some of the noblest services to my country. That wish to leave behind one a name that cannot die, is indeed a splendid ambition!"

"I thought," replied the other, "that you had already embraced views of a different character, entered into by your father to promote *your own happiness.*"

Osborne started, blushed, and for more than half a minute returned no answer. "True," said he at last, "true, *I had forgotten that.*"

His tutor immediately perceived that an ambition not unnatural, indeed, to a young man possessing such fine talents, had strongly seized upon his heart, and knowing as he did his attachment to Jane, he would have advised his immediate return home, had it not been already determined on, in consequence of medical advice, that he himself should visit Bath for the benefit of his health, and his pupil could by no arguments be dissuaded from accompanying him.

This brief view of Osborne's intentions, at the close of the period agreed on for his return, was necessary to explain an observation made by Agnes in the last dialogue which we have given between herself and her younger sister. We allude to the complaint which she playfully charged Jane with having made to her brother concerning the length of time which had elapsed since she last heard from her lover. The truth is, that with the exception of Jane herself, both families were even then deeply troubled in consequence of a letter directed by Charles's tutor to Mr. Osborne. That letter was the last which the amiable gentleman ever wrote, for he had not been in Bath above a week when he sank suddenly under a disease of the heart, to which he had for some years been subject. His death, which distressed young Osborne very much, enabled him, however, to plead the necessity of attending to his friend's obsequies, in reply to his father's call on him to return to his family. The next letter stated that he would not lose a moment in complying with his wishes, as no motive existed to detain him from home, and the third expressed the uncommon benefit which he had, during his brief residence there, experienced from the use of the waters. Against this last argument the father had nothing to urge. His son's health was to him a consideration paramount to every

other, and he wrote to Charles that if he found himself improved either by the air or waters of Bath, he should not hurry his return as he had intended. "Only write to your friends," said he, "*they* are as anxious for the perfect establishment of your health as I am."

This latter correspondence between Mr. Osborne and his son, was submitted to Mr. Sinclair, that it might be mentioned to serve as an apology for Charles's delay in replying to her last letter. This step was suggested by Mr. Sinclair himself, who dreaded the consequences which any appearance of neglect might have upon a heart so liable to droop as that of his gentle daughter. Jane, who *was* easily depressed, but not suspicious, smiled at the simplicity of her papa, as she said, in deeming it necessary to make any apology for Charles Osborne's not writing to her by return of post.

"It will be time enough," she added, "when his letters get cool, and come but seldom, to make excuses for him. Surely, my dear papa, if any one blamed him, I myself would be, and ought to be the first to defend him."

"Yet," observed William, "you could complain to me about his letting a letter of yours stand over a fortnight before he answered it. Jane—Jane—there's no knowing you girls; particularly when you're in love; but, indeed, then you don't know yourselves, so how should we?"

"But, papa," she added, looking earnestly upon him; "it is rather strange that you are so anxious to apologize for Charles. I cannot question my papa, and I shall not; but yet upon second thoughts, it is very strange."

"No, my love, but I would not have you a day uneasy."

"Well," she replied, musing—but with a keen eye bent alternately upon him and William; "it is a simple case, I myself have a very ready solution for his want of punctuality, if it can be called such, or if it continue such."

"And pray what is it, Jane," asked William.

"Excuse me, dear William—if I told you it might reach him, and then he might shape his conduct to meet it—I may mention it some day, though; but I hope there will never be occasion. Papa, don't you ask me, because if you do, I shall feel it my duty to tell you; and I would rather not, sir, except you press me. But why after all should I make a secret of it. It is, papa, the test of all things, as well as of Charles's punctuality—for, of his affection I will never doubt. It is time—time; but indeed I wish you had not spoken to me about it; I was not uneasy."

The poor girl judged Osborne through a misapprehension which, had she known more of life, or even reflected upon his neglect in writing to her, would have probably caused her to contemplate his conduct in a different light. She thought because his letters were nearly as frequent since his return to England, as they had been during his tour on the continent, that the test of his respect and attachment was sustained. In fact, she was ignorant that he had written several letters of late to his own family, without having addressed to her a single line; or even mentioned her name, and this circumstance was known to them all, with the exception of herself, as was the tutor's previous letter, of which she had never heard.

It was no wonder, therefore, that her father, who was acquainted with this, and entertained such serious apprehensions for his daughter's state of mind, should feel anxious, that until Osborne's conduct were better understood, no doubt of his sincerity should reach the confiding girl's heart. The old man, however, unconsciously acted upon his own impressions rather than on Jane's knowledge of what had occurred. In truth, he forgot that the actual state of the matter was unknown to her, and the consequence was, that in attempting to efface an impression that did not exist, he alarmed her suspicion by his mysterious earnestness of manner, and thereby created the very uneasiness he wished to remove.

From this day forward, Jane's eye became studiously vigilant of the looks and motions of the family. Her melancholy returned, but it was softer and serener than it had ever been before; so did the mild but pensive spirit of devotion which had uniformly accompanied it. The sweetness of her manner was irresistible, if not affecting, for there breathed through the composure of her countenance an air of mingled sorrow and patience, so finely blended, that it was difficult to determine, on looking at her, whether she secretly rejoiced or mourned.

A few days more brought another letter from Osborne to his father, which contained a proposal for which the latter, in consequence of the tutor's letter, was not altogether unprepared. It was a case put to the father for the purpose of ascertaining whether, if he, Charles, were offered an opportunity of appearing in public life, he would recommend him to accept it. He did not say that such an opening had really presented itself, but he strongly urged his father's permission to embrace it if it should.

This communication was immediately laid

before Mr. Sinclair, who advised his friend, ere he took any other step, or hazarded an opinion upon it. to require from Charles an explicit statement of the motives which induced him to solicit such a sanction. "Until we know what he means," said he, "it is impossible for us to know how to advise him. That he has some ambitious project in view, is certain. Mr. Harvey's (his tutor) letter and this both prove it."

"But in the meantime, we must endeavor to put such silly projects out of his head, my dear friend. I am more troubled about that sweet girl than about any thing else. I cannot understand his neglect of her."

"Few, indeed, are worthy of that angel," replied her father, sighing; "I hope he may. If Charles, after what has passed, sports with her happiness, he will one day have a fearful reckoning of it, unless he permits his conscience to become altogether seared."

"It cannot happen," replied the other; "I know my boy, his heart is noble; no, no, he is incapable of dishonor, much less of perfidy so black as that would be. In my next letter, however, I shall call upon him to explain himself upon that subject, as well as the other, and if he replies by an evasion, I shall instantly command him home."

They then separated, with a feeling of deep but fatherly concern, one anxious for the honor of his son, and the other trembling for the happiness of his daughter.

Mr. Sinclair was a man in whose countenance could be read all the various emotions that either exalted or disturbed his heart. If he felt joy his eye became irradiated with benignant lustre, that spoke at once of happiness; and, when depressed by care or sorrow, it was easy to see by the serious composure of his face, that something troubled or disturbed him. Indeed, this candor of countenance is peculiar to those only who have not schooled their faces into hypocrisy. After his return from the last interview with Mr. Osborne, his family perceived at a glance that something more than usually painful lay upon his mind; and such was the affectionate sympathy by which they caught each other's feelings, that every countenance, save one, became partially overshadowed. Jane, although her eye was the first and quickest to notice this anxiety of her father, exhibited no visible proof of a penetration so acute and lively. The serene light that beamed so mournfully from her placid but melancholy brow, was not darkened by what she saw; on the contrary, that brow became, if possible, more serene; for in truth, the gentle enthusiast had already formed a settled plan of exalted resignation that was designed to sustain her under an apprehension far different from that which Osborne's ambitious speculations in life would have occasioned her to feel had she known them.

"I see," said she with a smile, "that my papa has no good news to tell. A letter has come to his father, but none to me; but you need not fear for my firmness, papa. I know from whence to expect support; indeed, from the beginning I knew that I would require it. You often affectionately chid me for entertaining apprehensions too gloomy; but now they are not gloomy, because, if what I surmise be true, Charles and I will not be so long separated as you imagine. The hope of this, papa, is my consolation."

"Why, what do you surmise, my love," asked her father.

"That Charles is gone, perhaps irretrievably gone in decline; you know it is the hereditary complaint of his family. What else could, or would—yes, papa, or *ought* to keep him so long from home—from his friends—from me. Yes, indeed," she added with a smile, "from me, papa—from his own Jane Sinclair, and he so near us, in England, and the time determined on for his return expired."

"But you know, Jane," said her father, gratified to find that her suspicion took a wrong direction, "the air of Bath, he writes, is agreeing with him."

"I hope it may, papa; I hope it may; but you may rest assured, that whatever happens, the lesson you have taught me, will, aided by divine support, sustain my soul, so long as the frail tenement in which it is lodged may last. That will not be long."

"True religion, my love, is always cheerful, and loves to contemplate the brighter side of every human event. I do not like to see my dear child so calm, nor her countenance shaded by melancholy so fixed as that I have witnessed on it of late."

"Eternity, papa—a happy eternity, what is it, but the brighter side of human life—here we see only as in a glass darkly; there, in our final destiny, we reach the fulness of our happiness. I am not melancholy, but resigned; and resignation has a peace peculiar to itself; a repose which draws us gently, for a little time, out of the memory of our sorrows; but without refreshing the heart—without refreshing the heart. No, papa, I am not melancholy—I am not melancholy; I could bear Charles's death, and look up to my God for strength and support under it; but," she added, shaking her head, with a smile marked by something of a wild meaning, "if he could forget me for another, —no I will not say for another, but if he could only forget me, and his vows of undying affection, then indeed—then—then—

papa—ha!—no—no—he could *not*—he *could* not."

This conversation, when repeated to the family, deeply distressed them, involved in doubt and uncertainty as they were with respect to Osborne's ultimate intentions. Until a reply, however, should be received to his father's letter, which was written expressly to demand an explanation on that point, they could only soothe the unhappy girl in the patient sorrow which they saw gathering in her heart. That, however, which alarmed them most, was her insuperable disrelish to any thing in the shape of consolation or sympathy. This, to them, was indeed a new trait in the character of one who had heretofore been so anxious to repose the weight of her sufferings upon the bosoms of those who loved her. Her chief companion now was Ariel, her dove, to which she was seen to address herself with a calm, smiling aspect, not dissimilar to the languid cheerfulness of an invalid, who might be supposed as yet incapable from physical weakness to indulge in a greater display of animal spirits. Her walks, too, were now all solitary, with the exception of her mute companion, and it was observed that she never, in a single instance, was known to traverse any spot over which she and Osborne had not walked together. Here she would linger, and pause, and muse, and address Ariel, as if the beautiful creature were capable of comprehending the tenor of her language.

"Ariel," said she one day, speaking to the bird; "there is the yew tree, under which your preserver and I first disclosed our love. The yew tree, sweet bird, is the emblem of death, and so it will happen; for Charles is dying, I know—I feel that he will die; and I will die, early; we will both die early; for I would not be able to live here after him, Ariel, and how could I? Yet I should like to see him once—*once* before he dies; to see him, Ariel, in the fulness of his beauty; my eye to rest upon him once more; and then I could die smiling."

She then sat down under the tree, and in a voice replete with exquisite pathos and melody sang the plaintive air which Osborne had played on the evening when the first rapturous declaration of their passion was made. This incident with the bird also occurred much about the same hour of the day, a remembrance which an association, uniformly painful to her moral sense, now revived with peculiar power, for she started and became pale.

"Alas, my sweet bird," she exclaimed, "what is this; I shall be absent from evening worship again—but I will not prevaricate *now;* why—why is this spot to be fatal to me? Come, Ariel, come: perhaps I may not be late."

She hastened home with a palpitating heart, and unhappily arrived only in time to find the family rising from prayer.

As she stood and looked upon them, she smiled, but a sudden paleness at the same instant overspread her face, which gave to her smile an expression we are utterly incompetent to describe.

"I *am* late," she exclaimed, "and have neglected a solemn and a necessary duty. To me, to me, papa, how necessary is that duty."

"It is equally so to us all, my child," replied her father; "but," he added, in order to reconcile her to an omission which had occasioned her to suffer so much pain before, "we did not forget to pray for you, Jane. With respect to your absence, we know it was unintentional. Your mind is troubled, my love, and do not, let me beg of you, dwell upon minor points of that kind, so as to interrupt the singleness of heart with which you ought to address God. You know, darling, you can pray in your own room."

She mused for some minutes, and at length said, "I would be glad to preserve that singleness of heart, but I fear I will not be able to do so long."

"If you would stay more with us, darling," observed her mamma, "and talk and chat more with Maria and Agnes, as you used to do, you would find your spirits improved. You are not so cheerful as we would wish to see you."

"Perhaps I ought to do that, mamma; indeed I know I ought, because you wish it."

"We all wish it," said Agnes, "Jane dear, why keep aloof from us? Who in the world loves you as we do; and why would you not, as you used to do, allow us to cheer you, to support you, or to mourn and weep with you; anything—anything," said the admirable girl, "rather than keep your heart from ours;" and as she spoke, the tears fell fast down her cheeks.

"Dear Agnes," said Jane, putting her arm about her sister's neck, and looking up mournfully into her face; "I cannot weep for myself—I cannot weep even with you; you know I love you—*how* I love you—oh, how I love you all; but I cannot tell why it is—society, even the society of them I love best, disturbs me, and you know not the pleasure—melancholy I grant it to be, but you know not the pleasure that comes to me from solitude. To me—to me there is a charm in it ten times more soothing to my heart than all the power of human consolation."

"But why so melancholy at all, Jane," said Maria, "surely there is no just cause for it."

She smiled as she replied, "Why am I melancholy, Maria?—why? why should I not? Do I not read the approaching death of Charles Osborne in the gloom of every countenance about me? Why do you whisper to each other that which you will not let me hear? Why is there a secret and anxious, and a mysterious intercourse between this family and his, of the purport of which I am kept ignorant—and *I* alone?"

"But suppose Charles Osborne is not sick," said William; "suppose he was never in better health than he is at this moment—" he saw his father's hand raised, and paused, then added, carelessly, "for supposition's sake I say merely."

"But you must not suppose that, William," she replied, starting, "unless you wish to blight your sister. On what an alternative then, would you force a breaking heart. If not sick, if not dying, where is he? I require him—I demand him. My heart," she proceeded, rising up and speaking with vehemence—"my heart calls for him—shouts aloud in its agony—shouts aloud—shouts aloud for him. He is, he is sick; the malady of his family is upon him; he is ill—he is dying; it must be so; ay, and it *shall* be so; I can bear that, I can bear him to die, but never to become faithless to a heart like mine. But I am foolish," she added, after a pause, occasioned by exhaustion; "Oh, my dear William, why, by idle talk, thus tamper with your poor affectionate sister's happiness? I know you meant no harm, but oh, William, William, do it no more."

"I only put it, dear Jane, I only put it as a mere case,"—the young man was evidently cut to the heart, and could not for some moments speak.

She saw his distress, and going over to him, took his hand and said, "Don't, William, don't; it is nothing but merely one of your good-humored attempts to make your sister cheerful. There," she added, kissing his cheek; "there is a kiss for you; the kiss of peace let it be, and forgiveness; but I have nothing to forgive you for, except too much affection for an unhappy sister, who, I believe, is likely to be troublesome enough to you all; but, perhaps not long—not long."

There were few dry eyes in the room, as she uttered the last words.

"I do not like to see you weep," she added, "when I could have wept myself, and partaken of your tears, it was rather a relief to me than otherwise. It seems, however, that my weeping days are past; do not, oh do not—you trouble me, and I want to compose my mind for a performance of the solemn act which I have this evening neglected. Mamma, kiss me, and pray for me; I love you well and tenderly, mamma; I am sure you know I do."

The sorrowing mother caught her to her bosom, and, after kissing her passive lips, burst out into a sobbing fit of grief.

"Oh, my daughter, my daughter," she exclaimed, still clasping her to her heart, "and is it come to this! Oh, that we had never seen him!"

"This, my dear," said Mr. Sinclair to his wife, "is wrong; indeed, it is weakness; you know she wants to compose her mind for prayer."

"I do, papa; they must be more firm; I need to pray. I know my frailties, you know them too, sir; I concealed them from you as long as I could, but their burden was too heavy for my heart; bless me now, before I go; I will kneel."

The sweet girl knelt beside him, and he placed his hand upon her stooping head, and blessed her. She then raised herself, and looking up to him with a singular expression of wild sweetness beaming in her eyes, she said, leaning her head again upon his breast,

"There are two bosoms, on which, I trust, I and my frailties can repose with hope; I know I shall soon pass from the one to the other—

"The bosom of my *father* and my *God*."

Will not they be sweet, papa?"

She spoke thus with a smile of such unutterable sweetness, her beautiful eyes gazing innocently up into her father's countenance, that the heart of the old man was shaken through every fibre. He saw, however, what must be encountered, and was resolved to act a part worthy of the religion he professed. He arose, and taking her hand in his, said, "You wish to pray, dearest love; that is right; your head has been upon my bosom, and I blessed you; go now, and, with a fervent heart, address yourself to the throne of grace; in doing this, my sweet child, piously and earnestly, you *will* pass from my bosom to the bosom of your God. Cast yourself upon Him, my love; above all things, cast yourself with humble hope and earnest supplication upon *His*. This, my child, indeed is sweet; and you will find it so; come, darling, come."

He led her out of the room, and after a few words more of affectionate advice, left her to that solitude for which he hoped the frame of mind in which she then appeared was suitable.

"Her sense of religion," he said, after returning to the family, "is not only delicate, but deep; her piety is fervent and profound. I do not therefore despair but religion will

carry her through whatever disappointment Charles's flighty enthusiasm may occasion her."

"I wish, papa," said Agnes, "I could think so. As she herself said, she might bear his death, for that would involve no act of treachery, of falsehood on his part; but to find that he is capable of forgetting their betrothed vows, sanctioned as they were by the parents of both—indeed, papa, if such a thing happen——"

"I should think it will not," observed her mother; "Charles has, as you have just said, enthusiasm; now, will not that give an impulse to his love, as well as to his ambition?"

"But if ambition, my dear, has become the predominant principle in his character, it will draw to its own support all that nourished his other passions. Love is never strong where ambition exists—nor ambition where there is love."

"I cannot entertain the thought of Charles Osborne being false to her," said Maria; "his passion for her was more like idolatry than love."

"He is neglecting her, though," said William; "and did she not suppose that that is caused by illness, I fear she would not bear it even as she does."

"I agree with *you*, William," observed Agnes; "but after all, it is better to have patience until Mr. Osborne hears from him. His reply will surely be decisive as to his intentions. All may end better than we think."

Until this reply should arrive, however. they were compelled to remain in that state of suspense which is frequently more painful than the certainty of evil itself. Jane's mind and health were tended with all the care and affection which her disinclination to society would permit them to show. They forced themselves to be cheerful in order that she might unconsciously partake of a spirit less gloomy than that which every day darkened more deeply about her path. Any attempt to give her direct consolation, however, was found to produce the very consequences which they wished so anxiously to prevent. If for this purpose they entered into conversation with her, no matter in what tone of affectionate sweetness they addressed her, such was the irresistible pathos of her language, that their hearts became melted, and, instead of being able to comfort the beloved mourner, they absolutely required sympathy themselves. Since their last dialogue, too, it was evident from her manner that some fresh source of pain had been on that occasion opened in her heart. For nearly a week afterwards her eye was fixed from time to time upon her brother William, with a long gaze of hesitation and enquiry—not unmingled with a character of suspicion that appeared still further to sink her spirits by a superadded weight of misery.

Nearly a fortnight had now elasped since Charles Osborne ought to have received his father's letter, and yet no communication had reached either of the families. Indeed the gradual falling off of his correspondence with Jane, and the commonplace character of his few last letters left little room to hope that his affection for her stood the severe test of time and absence. One morning about this period she brought William into the garden, and after a turn or too, laid her hand gently upon his arm, saying,

"William, I have a secret to entrust you with."

"A secret, Jane—well, I will keep it honorably—what is it, dear?"

"I am very unhappy."

"Surely that's no secret to me, my poor girl."

She shook her head.

"No, no; that's not it; but this is—I strongly suspect that you all know more about Charles than I do."

She fixed her eyes with an earnest penetration on him as she spoke.

"He is expected home soon, Jane."

"He is *not* ill, William; and you have all permitted me to deceive myself into a belief that he is; because you felt that I would rather ten thousand times that he were dead than false—than false."

"He could not, he dare not be false to you, my dear, after having been solemnly betrothed to you, I may say with the consent of your father and his."

"*Dare not*—ha—there is meaning in that, William; your complexion is heightened, too; and so I have found out your secret, my brother. Sunk as is my heart, you see I have greater penetration than you dream of. So he is not sick, but false; and his love for me is gone like a dream. Well, well; but yet I have laid down my own plan of resignation. You would not guess what it is? Come, guess; I will hear nothing further till you guess."

He thought it was better to humor her, and replied in accordance with the hope of his father.

"Religion, my dear Jane, and reliance on God."

"That was my first plan; that was my plan in case the malady I suspected had taken him from me—but what is my plan for his falsehood?"

"I cannot guess, dear Jane."

"Death, William. What consoler like

death? what peace so calm as that of the grave? Let the storm of life howl ever so loudly, go but six inches beneath the clay of the church-yard and how still is all there!"

"Indeed, Jane, you distress yourself without cause; never trust me again if Charles will not soon come home, and you and he be happy. Why, my dear Jane, I thought you had more fortitude than to sink under a calamity that has not yet reached you. Surely it will be time enough when you find that Charles *is* false to take it so much to heart as you do."

"That is a good and excellent advice, my dear William; but listen, and I will give a far better one: never deceive your father; never prevaricate with papa, and then you may rest satisfied that your heart will not be crushed by such a calamity as that which has fallen upon me. I deceived papa; and I am now the poor hopeless *cast-away* that you see me. Remember that advice, William—keep it, and God will bless you."

William would have remonstrated with her at greater length, but he saw that she was resolved to have no further conversation on the subject. When it was closed she walked slowly and composedly out of the garden, and immediately took her way to those favorite places among which she was latterly in the habit of wandering. One of her expressions, however, sunk upon his affectionate heart too deeply to permit him to rest under the fearful apprehension which it generated. After musing for a little he followed her with a pale face and a tearful eye, resolved to draw from her, with as much tenderness as possible, the exact meaning which, in her allusion to Osborne's falsehood, she had applied to *death*.

He found her sitting upon the bank of the river which we have already described, and exactly opposite to the precise spot in the stream from which Osborne had rescued Ariel. The bird sat on her shoulder, and he saw by her gesture that she was engaged in an earnest address to it. He came on gently behind her, actuated by that kind curiosity which knows that in such unguarded moments a key may possibly be obtained to the abrupt and capricious impulse by which persons laboring under impressions so variable may be managed.

"I will beat you, Ariel," said she, "I will beat you—fie upon you. You an angel of light—no, no—have I not often pointed you out the spot which would have been fatal to you, were it not for *him*—for HIM! Stupid bird! there it is! do you not see it? No, as I live, your eye is turned up sideways towards me, instead of looking at it, as if you asked why, dear mistress, do you scold me so? And indeed I do not know, Ariel. I scarcely know—but oh, my dear creature, if you knew—if you knew—it is well you don't. I am here—so are you—but where is he?"

She was then silent for a considerable time, and sat with her head on her hand. William could perceive that she sighed deeply.

He advanced; and on hearing his foot she started, looked about, and on seeing him, smiled.

"I am amusing myself, William," said she.

"How, my dear Jane—how?"

"Why, by the remembrance of my former misery. You know that the recollection of all past happiness is misery to the miserable—is it not? but of that you are no judge, William—you were never miserable."

"Nor shall you be so, Jane, longer than until Charles returns; but touching your second plan of resignation, love. I don't understand how *death* could be resignation."

"Do you not? then I will tell you. Should Charles prove false to me—*that* would break my heart. I should *die*, and then—then—do you not see—comes Death, the consoler."

"I see, dear sister; but there will be no necessity for that. Charles will be, and is, faithful and true to you. Will you come home with me, dear Jane?"

"At present I cannot, William; I have places to see and things to think of that are pleasant to me. I may almost say so; because as I told you they *amuse* me. Let misery have its mirth, William; the remembrance of past happiness is mine."

"Jane, if you love me come home with me now?"

"*If* I do. Ah, William, that's ungenerous. You are well aware that I do, and so you use an argument which you know I won't resist. Come," addressing the dove, "we must go; we are put upon our generosity; for of course we *do* love poor William. Yes, we will go, William; it is better, I believe."

She then took his arm, and both walked home without speaking another word; Jane having relapsed into a pettish silence which her brother felt it impossible to break without creating unnecessary excitement in a mind already too much disturbed.

From this day forward Jane's mind, fragile as it naturally was, appeared to bend at once under the double burden of Osborne's approaching death, and his apprehended treachery; for wherever the heart is found to choose between two contingent evils, it is also by the very constitution of our nature compelled to bear the penalty of both until its gloomy choice is made. At present Jane

"HAVE I NOT OFTEN POINTED YOU OUT THE SPOT WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN FATAL TO YOU, WERE IT NOT FOR HIM—FOR HIM?"—*Jane Sinclair*, Part Third, p. 44.

was not certain whether Osborne's absence and neglect were occasioned by ill health or faithlessness; and until she knew this the double dread fell, as we said, with proportionate misery upon her spirit.

Bitterly, indeed, did William regret the words in which he desired her "to suppose that Charles Osborne was not sick." Mr. Sinclair himself saw the error, but unhappily too late to prevent the suspicion from entering into an imagination already overwrought and disordered.

Hitherto, however, it was difficult, if not impossible, out of her own family, to notice in her manner or conversation the workings of a mind partially unsettled by a passion which her constitutional melancholy darkened by its own gloomy creations. To strangers she talked rationally, and with her usual grace and perspicuity, but every one observed that her cheerfulness was gone, and the current report went, by whatever means it got abroad, that Jane Sinclair's heart was broken—that Charles Osborne proved faithless—and that the beautiful Fawn of Springvale was subject to occasional derangement.

In the meantime Osborne was silent both to his father and to her, and as time advanced the mood of her mind became too seriously unhappy and alarming to justify any further patience on the part either of his family or Mr. Sinclair's. It was consequently settled that Mr. Osborne should set out for Bath, and compel his son's return, under the hope that a timely interview might restore the deserted girl to a better state of mind, and reproduce in his heart that affection which appeared to have either slumbered or died. With a brow of care the excellent man departed, for in addition to the concern which he felt for the calamity of Jane Sinclair and Charles's honor, he also experienced all the anxiety natural to an affectionate father, ignorant of the situation in which he might find an only son, who up to that period had been, and justly too, inexpressibly dear to him.

His absence, however, was soon discovered by Jane, who now began to give many proofs of that address with which unsettled persons can manage to gain a point or extract a secret, when either in their own opinion is considered essential to their gratification. Every member of her own family now became subjected to her vigilance; every word they spoke was heard with suspicion, and received as if it possessed a double meaning. On more than one occasion she was caught in the attitude of a listener, and frequently placed herself in such a position when sitting with her relations at home, as enabled her to watch their motions in the glass, when they supposed her engaged in some melancholy abstraction.

Yet bitter, bitter as all this must have been to their hearts, it was singular to mark, that as the light of her reason receded, a new and solemn feeling of reverence was added to all of love, and sorrow, and pity, that they had hitherto experienced towards her. Now, too, was her sway over them more commanding, though exercised only in the woeful meekness of a broken heart; for, indeed, there is in the darkness of unmerited affliction, a spirit which elevates its object, and makes unsuffering nature humble in its presence. Who is there that has a heart, and few, alas, have, that does not feel himself constrained to bend his head with reverence before those who move in the majesty of undeserved sorrow?

Mr. Osborne had not been many days gone, when Jane, one morning after breakfast, desired the family not to separate for about an hour, or if they did, to certainly reassemble within that period. "And in the meantime," she said, addressing Agnes, "I want you, my dear Agnes, to assist me at my *toilette*, as they say. I am about to dress in my very best, and it cannot, you know, be from vanity, for I have no one now to gratify but yourselves—come."

Mr. Sinclair beckoned with his hand to Agnes to attend her, and they accordingly left the room together.

"What is the reason, Agnes," she said, "that there is so much mystery in this family? I do not like these nods, and beckonings, and gestures, all so full of meaning. It grieves me to see my papa, who is the very soul of truth and candor, have recourse to them. But, alas, why should I blame any of you, when I know that it is from an excess of indulgence to poor Jane, and to avoid giving her pain that you do it?"

"Well, we will not do it any more, love, if it pains or is disagreeable to you."

"It confounds me, Agnes, it injures my head, and sometimes makes me scarcely know where I am, or who are about me. I begin to think that there's some dreadful secret among you; and I think of coffins, and deaths, or of marriages, and wedding favors, and all that. Now, I can't bear to think of marriages, but death has something consoling in it; give me death the consoler: yet," she added, musing, "we shall not die, but we shall all be changed."

"Jane, love, may I ask you *why* you are dressing with such care?"

"When we go down stairs I shall tell you. It's wonderful, wonderful!"

"What is, dear?"

"My fortitude. But those words were prophetic. I remember well what I felt when

I heard them; to be sure he placed them in a different light from what I at first understood them in; but I am handsomer now, I think. You will be a witness for me below, Agnes, will you not?"

"To be sure, darling."

"Agnes, where are my tears gone of late? I think I ought to advertise for them, or advertise for others, 'Wanted for unhappy Jane Sinclair'"—

Agnes could bear no more. "Jane," she exclaimed, clasping her in her arms, and kissing her smiling lips, for she smiled while uttering the last words, "oh, Jane, don't, don't, my darling, or you will break my heart—your own Agnes's heart, whom you loved so well, and whose happiness or misery is bound up in yours."

"For unhappy Jane Sinclair!—no I won't distress you, dear Agnes; let the advertisement go; here, I will kiss you, love, and dry your tears, and then when I am dressed you shall know all."

She took up her own handkerchief as she spoke, and after having again kissed her sister, wiped her cheeks and dried her eyes with childlike tenderness and affection. She then looked sorrowfully upon Agnes, and said—"Oh, Agnes, Agnes, but my heart is heavy—heavy!"

Agnes's tears were again beginning to flow, but Jane once more kissed her, and hastily wiping her eyes, exclaimed in that sweet, low voice with which we address children, "Hush, hush, Agnes, do not cry, I will not make you sorry any more."

She then went on to dress herself, but uttered not another word until she and Agnes met the family below stairs.

"I am now come, papa and mamma, and William, and my darling Maria—but, Maria, listen,—I won't have a tear, and you, Agnes,—I am come now to tell you a secret."

"And, dearest life," said her mother, "what is it?"

"What made them call me the Fawn of Springvale?"

"For your gentleness, love," said Mr. Sinclair.

"And for your beauty, darling," added her mother.

"Papa has it," she replied quickly; "for my gentleness, for my gentleness. My beauty, mamma, I am *not* beautiful."

While uttering these words, she approached the looking-glass, and surveyed herself with a smile of irony that seemed to disclaim her own assertion. But it was easy to perceive that the irony was directed to some one not then present, and that it was also associated with the memory of something painful to her in an extreme degree.

Not beautiful! Never did mortal form gifted with beauty approaching nearer to our conception of the divine or angelic, stand smiling in the consciousness of its own charms before a mirror.

"Now," she proceeded, "I am going to make everything quite plain. I never told you this before, but it is time I should now. Listen—Charles Osborne bound himself by a curse, that if he met, during his absence, a girl more beautiful than I am—or than I was then, I should say,—he would cease to write to me—he would cease to love me. Now, here's my secret,—he *has* found a girl more beautiful than I am,—than I was then, I mean,—for he *has* ceased to write to me—and of course he has ceased to love me. So mamma, I am *not* beautiful, and the Fawn of Springvale—his own Jane Sinclair is forgotten."

She sat down and hung her head for some minutes, and the family, thinking that she either wept or was about to weep, did not think it right to address her. She rose up, however, and said:

"Agnes is my witness: Did not you, Agnes, say that I *am now* much handsomer than when Charles saw me last?"

"I did, darling, and I do."

"Very well, mamma—perhaps you will find me beautiful yet. Now the case is this, and I will be guided by my papa. Let me see—Charles may have seen a girl more beautiful than *I* was *then*,—but how does he know whether she is more beautiful than *I* am *now?*"

It was—it was woful to see a creature of such unparalleled grace and loveliness working out the calculations of insanity, in order to sustain a broken heart.

"But then," she added, still smiling in conscious beauty, "why does he not come to see me now? Why does he not come?"

After musing again for some time, she dropped on her knees in one of those rapid transitions of feeling peculiar to persons of her unhappy class; and joining her hands, looked up to Agnes with a countenance utterly and indescribably mournful, exclaiming as she did it, in the same words as before:—

"Oh Agnes, Agnes, but my heart is heavy!"

She then laid down her head on her sister's knees, and for a long time mused and murmured to herself, as if her mind was busily engaged on some topic full of grief and misery. This was evident by the depth of her sighs, which shook her whole frame, and heaved with convulsive quiverings through her bosom. Having remained in this posture about ten minutes, she arose, and without speaking, or noticing any of the

family, went out and sauntered with slow and melancholy steps about the place where she loved to walk.

Mr. Sinclair's family at this period, and indeed, for a considerable time past were placed, with reference to their unhappy daughter in circumstances of peculiar distress. Their utter ignorance of Osborne's designs put it out of their power to adopt any particular mode of treatment in Jane's case. They could neither give her hope, nor prepare her mind for disappointment; but were forced to look passively on, though with hearts wrung into agony, whilst her miserable malady every day gained new strength in its progress of desolation. The crisis was near at hand, however, that was to terminate their suspense. A letter from Mr. Osborne arrived, in which he informed them that Charles had left Bath, for London, in company with a family of rank, a few days before he reached it. He mentioned the name of the baronet, whose beautiful daughter, possessing an ample fortune, at her own disposal, fame reported to have been smitten with his son's singular beauty and accomplishments. It was also said, he added, that the lady had prevailed on her father to sanction young Osborne's addresses to her, and that the baronet, who was a strong political partizan, calculating upon his pre-eminent talents, intended to bring him into parliament, in order to strengthen his party. He added that he himself was then starting for London, to pursue his son, and rescue him from an act which would stamp his name with utter baseness and dishonor.

This communication, so terrible in its import to a family of such worth and virtue, was read to them by Mr. Sinclair, during one of those solitary rambles which Jane was in the habit of taking every day.

"Now, my children," said the white-haired father, summoning all the fortitude of a Christian man to his aid,—"now must we show ourselves not ignorant of those resources which the religion of Christ opens to all who are for His wise purposes grievously and heavily afflicted. Let us act as becomes the dignity of our faith. We must suffer: let it be with patience, and a will resigned to that which laid the calamity upon us,—and principally upon the beloved mourner who is dear, dear—and oh! how justly is she dear to all our hearts! Be firm, my children—and neither speak, nor look, nor act as if these heavy tidings had reached us. This is not only our duty, but our wisest course under circumstances so distressing as ours. Another letter from Mr. Osborne will decide all, and until then we must suffer in silent reliance upon the mercy of God. It may, however, be a consolation to you all to know, that if this young man's heart be detached from that of our innocent and loving child, I would rather—the disposing will of God being still allowed—see her wrapped in the cerements of death than united to one, who with so little scruple can trample upon the sanctions of religion, or tamper with the happiness of a fellow-creature. Oh, may God of His mercy sustain our child, and bear her in His own right hand through this heavy woe!"

This affecting admonition did not fall upon them in vain,—for until the receipt of Mr. Osborne's letter from London, not even Jane, with all her vigilance, was able to detect in their looks or manner any change or expression beyond what she had usually noticed. That letter at length arrived, and, as they had expected, filled up the measure of Osborne's dishonor and their affliction. The contents were brief but fearful. Mr. Osborne stated that he arrived in London on the second day after his son's marriage, and found, to his unutterable distress, that he and his fashionable wife had departed for the continent on the very day the ceremony took place.

"I could not," proceeded his father, "wrench my heart so suddenly out of the strong affection it felt for the hope of my past life, as to curse him; but, from this day forward I disown him as my son. You know not, my friend, what I feel, and what I suffer; for he who was the pride of my declining years has, by this act of unprincipled ambition, set his seal to the unhappiness of his father. I am told, indeed, that the lady is very beautiful—and amiable as she is beautiful—and that their passion for each other amounts to idolatry;—but neither her beauty, nor her wealth, nor her goodness could justify my son in an act of such cruel and abandoned perfidy to a creature who seems to be more nearly related to the angelic nature than the human."

"You see, my children," observed Mr. Sinclair, "that the worst, as far as relates to Osborne, is before us. I have nothing now to add to what I have already said on the receipt of the letter from Bath. You know your duty, and with God's assistance I trust you will act up to it. At present it might be fatal to our child were she to know what has happened; nor, indeed, are *we* qualified to break the matter to her, without the advice of some medical man, eminent in cases similar to that which afflicts her."

These observations were scarcely concluded when Jane entered the room, and as usual, cast a calm but searching glance around her. She saw that they had been in tears, and

that they tried in vain to force their faces into a hurried composure, that seemed strangely at variance with what they felt.

After a slight pause she sat down, and putting her hand to her temple, mused for some minutes. They observed that a sorrow more deep and settled than usual, was expressed on her countenance. Her eyes were filled, although tears did not come, and the muscles of her lips quivered excessively; yet she did not speak; and such was the solemnity of the moment to them, who knew all, that none of them could find voice sufficiently firm to address her.

"Papa," said she, at length, "this has been a day of busy thought with me. I think I see, and I am sure I feel my own situation. The only danger is, that I may feel it too much. I fear I have felt it—(she put her hand to her forehead as she spoke)—I fear I *have* felt it too deeply already. Pauses—lapses, or perhaps want of memory for a certain space, occasioned by—by——" she hesitated. "Bear with me, papa, and mamma; bear with me; for this is a great effort; let me recollect myself, and do not question me or speak to me until I——. It is, it is woeful to see me reduced to this; but nothing is seriously wrong with me yet—nothing. Let me see; yes, yes, papa, here it is. Let us not be reduced to the miserable necessity of watching each other, as we have been. Let me know the worst. You have nearly broken me down by suspense. Let me know the purport of the letter you received to-day."

"To-day, love!" exclaimed her mother.

"Yes, mamma, to-day. I made John show it me on his way from the post-office. The superscription was Mr. Osborne's hand. Let me, O let me," she exclaimed, dropping down upon her knees, "as you value my happiness here and hereafter, let me at once know the worst—the very worst. Am I not the daughter of a pious minister of the Gospel, and do you think I shall or can forget the instructions I received from his lips? Treat me as a rational being, if you wish me to remain rational. But O, as you love my happiness here, and my soul's salvation, do not, papa, do not, mamma, do not, Maria, do not, Agnes, William,—do not one or all of you keep your unhappy sister hanging in the agony of suspense! It will kill me!—it will kill me!"

Suppressed sobs there were, which no firmness could restrain. But in a few moments those precepts of the Christian pastor, which we have before mentioned, came forth among this sorrowing family, in the same elevated spirit which dictated them. When Jane had concluded this appeal to her father, there was a dead silence in the room, and every eye glanced from him to her, full of uncertainty as to what course of conduct he would pursue. He turned his eyes upwards for a few moments, and said:

"Can truth, my children, under any circumstances, be injurious to——"

"Oh no, no, papa," exclaimed Jane; "I know—I feel the penalty paid for even the indirect violation of it."

"In the name of God, then," exclaimed the well-meaning man, "we will rely upon the good sense and religious principle of our dear Jane, and tell her the whole truth."

"Henry, dear!" said Mrs. Sinclair in a tone of expostulation.

"Oh papa," said Agnes, "remember your own words!"

"The truth, my papa, the truth!" said Jane. "You are its accredited messenger."

"Jane," said he, "is your trust strong in the support of the Almighty?"

"I have no other dependence, papa."

"Then," said he, "this is the truth: Charles Osborne has been false to you. He has broken his vows;—he is married to another woman. And now, my child, may the God of truth, and peace, and mercy, sustain and console you!"

"And He will, too, my papa!—He will!" she exclaimed, rising up;—"He will! He will!—I—I know—I think I know something. I violated truth, and now truth is my punishment. I violated it to my papa, and now my papa is the medium of *that* punishment. Well, then, there's a Providence proved. But, in the mean time, mamma, what has become of my beauty? It is gone—it is gone—and now for humility and repentance—now for sackcloth and ashes. I am now no longer beautiful!—so off, off go the trappings of vanity!"

She put her hands up to her bosom, and began to tear down her dress with a violence so powerful, that it took William and Maria's strength to prevent her. She became furious. "Let me go," she exclaimed, "let me go; I am bound to a curse; but Charles, Charles—don't you see he will be poisoned: he will kiss her lips and be poisoned; poisoned lips for Charles, and I too see it!—and mine here with balm upon them, and peace and love! My boy's lost, and I am lost, and the world has destroyed us."

She wrought with incredible strength, and attempted still, while speaking, to tear her garments off; but finding herself overpowered, she at length sat down and passed from this state of violence into a mood so helplessly calm, that the family, now in an outcry of grief, with the exception of her father who *appeared* cool, felt their very

hearts shiver at the vacant serenity of her countenance.

Her mother went over, and, seizing her husband firmly by the arms, pulled him towards her, and with an ashy face and parched lips, exclaimed, "There, Charles—all is now over—our child is an idiot!"

"Oh do not blame me," said the broken-hearted father; "I did it for the best. Had I thought—had I thought—but I will speak to her, for I think my voice will reach her heart—you know how she loved me."

"Jane," said he, approaching her, "Jane, my dearest life, will you not speak to your papa?"

She became uneasy again, and, much to their relief, broke silence.

"I am not," said she, calmly; "it is gone; I *was* once though—indeed, indeed I was; and it was said so; I was called the Fawn of —of—but it seems beauty passes like the flower of the field."

"Darling, speak to me, to your papa."

"I believe I am old now; an old woman, I suppose. My hair is gray, and I am wrinkled; that's the reason why they scorn me; well I was once both young and beautiful; but that is past. Charles," said she, catching her father's hand and looking into it, "*you* are old, too, I believe. Why—why —why, how is this? Your hair is long and white. Oh, what a change since I knew you last. White hair! long, white, venerable, hair—that's old age—

> "Pity old age within whose silver hairs
> Honor and reverence evermore do lie."

"Thank God, dear Henry," said her mother, "she is not at all events an idiot. Children," said she, "I trust you will remember your father's advice, and bear this—this ——." But here the heart and strength of the mother herself were overcome, and she was sinking down when her son caught her ere she fell, and carried her out in his arms, accompanied by Maria and Agnes.

It would be difficult for any pen to paint the distraction of her father, thus placed in a state of divided apprehension between his daughter and his wife.

"Oh, my child, my child," he exclaimed, "perhaps in the midst of this misery, your mother may be dying! May the God of all consolation support you and her! What, oh, what will become of us!"

"Well, well," his daughter went on; "life's a fearful thing that can work such changes; but why may we not as well pass at once from youth to old age as from happiness to misery? Here we are both old; ay, and if we are gray it is less with age than affliction—that's one comfort—I am young enough to be beautiful yet; but age, when it comes prematurely on the youthful, as it often does—thanks to treachery and disappointment, ay, and thanks to a thousand causes which we all know but don't wish to think of; age, I say, when it comes prematurely on the youthful, is just like a new and unfinished house that is suffered to fall into ruin—desolation, naked, and fresh, and glaring—without the reverence and grandeur of antiquity. Yes—yes—yes; but there is another cause; and that must be whispered only to the uttermost depths of silence—of silence; for silence is the voice of God. *That* word—*that* word! Oh, how I shudder to think of it! And who will pity me when I acknowledge it—there is one—one only—who will mourn for my despair and the fate, foreordained and predestined, of one whom he loved—that is my papa—my papa only—my papa only; for he knows that I am *a cast-away*—A CAST-AWAY!"

These words were uttered with an energy of manner and a fluency of utterance which medical men know to be strongly characteristic of insanity, unless indeed where the malady is silent and moping. The afflicted old man now discovered that his daughter's mind had, in addition to her disappointment, sunk under the frightful and merciless dogma which we trust will soon cease to darken and distort the beneficent character of God. Indeed it might have been evident to him before that in looking upon herself as a cast-away, Jane's sensitive spirit was gradually lapsing into the gloomy horrors of predestination. But this blindness of the father to such a tendency was very natural in a man to whose eye familiarity with the doctrine had removed its deformity. The old man looked upon her countenance with an expression of mute affliction almost verging on despair; for a moment he forgot the situation of his wife and everything but the consequences of a discovery so full of terror and dismay.

"Alas, my unhappy child," he exclaimed, "and is this, too, to be added to your misery and ours? Now, indeed, is the cup of our affliction full even to overflowing. O God! who art good and full of mercy," he added, dropping on his knees under the bitter impulse of the moment, "and who willest not the death of a sinner, oh lay not upon her or us a weight of sorrow greater than we can bear. We do not, O Lord! for we dare not, desire Thee to stay Thy hand; but oh, chastise us in mercy, especially her—her—our hearts' dearest—she was ever the child of our loves; but now she is also the unhappy child of all our sorrows; the broken idol of affections which we cannot change.

Enable us, O God, to acquiesce under this mysterious manifestation of Thy will, and to receive from Thy hand with patience and resignation whatsoever of affliction it pleaseth Thee to lay upon us. And touching this stricken one—if it were Thy blessed will to —to—but no—oh no—not *our* will, oh Lord, but *Thine* be done!"

It was indeed a beautiful thing to see the sorrow-bound father bowing down his gray locks with humility before the footstool of his God, and forbearing even to murmur under a dispensation so fearfully calamitous to him and his. Religion, however, at which the fool and knave may sneer in the moments of convivial riot, is after all the only stay on which the human heart can rest in those severe trials of life which almost every one sooner or later is destined to undergo. The sceptic may indeed triumph in the pride of his intellect or in the hour of his passion; but no matter on what arguments his hollow creed is based, let but the footstep of disease or death approach, and he himself is the first to abandon it and take refuge in those truths which he had hitherto laughed at or maligned.

When Mr. Sinclair arose, his countenance, through all the traces of sorrow which were upon it, beamed with a light which no principle, merely human, could communicate to it. A dim but gentle and holy radiance suffused his whole face, and his heart, for a moment, received the assurance it wanted so much. He experienced a feeling for which language has no terms, or at least none adequate to express its character. It was "that peace of God which passeth all understanding."

In a few minutes after he had concluded his short but earnest prayer, Agnes returned to let him know that her mamma was better and would presently come in to sit with Jane, whom she could not permit, she said, to remain out of her sight. Jane had been silent for some time, but the extreme brilliancy of her eyes and the energy of her excitement were too obvious to permit any expectation of immediate improvement.

When her mother and Maria returned, accompanied also by William, she took no notice whatsoever of them, nor indeed did she appear to have an eye for anything external to her own deep but unsettled misery. Time after time they spoke to her as before, each earnestly hoping that some favorite expression or familiar tone of voice might impinge, however slightly, upon her reason, or touch some chord of her affections. These tender devices of their love, however, all failed; no corresponding emotion was awakened, and they resolved, without loss of time, to see what course of treatment medical advice would recommend them to pursue on her behalf. Accordingly William proceeded with a heavy heart to call in the aid of a gentleman who can bear full testimony to the accuracy of our narrative—we allude to that able and eminent practitioner, Doctor M'Cormick of Belfast, whose powers of philosophical analysis and patient investigation are surpassed only by the success of the masterly skill with which he applies them. The moment he left the room for this purpose, Jane spoke.

"It will be hard," she said, "and I need not conceal it, for my very thought has a voice at the footstool of the Almighty; the intelligences of other worlds know it; all the invisible spirits of the universe know it; those that are evil rejoice, and the good would murmur if the fulness of their own happiness permitted them. No—no—I need not conceal it—hearken, therefore—hearken;" and she lowered her voice to a whisper—"the Fawn of Springvale—Jane Sinclair—is predestined to eternal misery. She is a cast-away. I may therefore speak and raise my voice to warn; who shall dare," she added, "who shall dare ever depart from the truth! Those—those only who have been foredoomed—like me. Oh misery, misery, is there no hope? nothing but despair for one so young, and as they said, so gentle, and so beautiful. Alas! alas! Death to me now is *no* consoler!"

She clasped her beautiful hands together as she spoke, and looked with a countenance so full of unutterable woe that no heart could avoid participating in her misery.

"Jane, oh darling of all our hearts," said her weeping mother, "will you not come over and sit beside your mamma—your mamma, my treasure, who feels that she cannot long live to witness what you suffer."

"The Fawn of Springvale," she proceeded, "the gentle Fawn of Springvale, for it was on the account of my gentleness I was so called, is stricken—the arrow is here—in her poor broken heart; and what did she do? what did the gentle creature do to suffer or to deserve all this misery?"

"True, my sister—too true, too true," said Maria, bursting into an agony of bitter sorrow; "what strange mystery is in the gentle one's affliction? Surely, if there was ever a spotless or a sinless creature on earth, she was and is that creature."

"Beware of murmuring, Maria," said her father; "the purpose, though at present concealed, may yet become sufficiently apparent for us to recognize in it the benignant dispensation of a merciful God. Our duty, my dear child, is now to bear, and be resigned. The issues of this sad calamity are with the Almighty, and with Him let us patiently leave them."

"Had I never disclosed my love," proceeded Jane, "I might have stolen quietly away from them all and laid my cheek on that hardest pillow which giveth the soundest sleep; but would not concealment," she added, starting; "would not *that too* have been dissimulation? Oh God help me!—it is, it is clear that in any event I was foredoomed!"

Agnes, who had watched her sister with an interest too profound to suffer even the grief necessary on such an occasion to take place, now went over, and taking her hand in one of hers, placed the fingers of the other upon her sister's cheek, thus attempting to fix Jane's eyes upon her own countenance—

"Do you not know who it is," said she, "that is now speaking to you?—Look upon *me*, and tell me do you forget me so soon?"

"Who can tell yet," she proceeded, "who can tell yet—time may retrieve all, and he may return: but the yew tree—I fear—I fear—why, it is an emblem of death; and perhaps death may unite us—yes, and I say he will—he will—he will. Does he not feel pity? Oh yes, in a thousand, thousand cases he is the friend of the miserable. Death the Consoler! Oh from how many an aching brow does he take away the pain for ever? How many sorrows does he soothe into rest that is never broken!—from how many hearts like mine, does he pluck the arrows that fester in them, and bids them feel pain no more! In his house, that house appointed for all living—what calmness and peace is there? How sweet and tranquil is the bed which he smoothes down for the unhappy; there the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. Then give me Death the Consoler?—Death the Consoler!"

A sense of relief and wild exultation beamed from her countenance, on uttering the last words, and she rose up and walked about the room wringing her hands, yet smiling at the idea of being relieved by Death the Consoler! It is not indeed unusual to witness in deranged persons, an unconscious impression of pain and misery, accompanied at the same time by a vague sense of unreal happiness—that is, a happiness which, whilst it balances the latent conviction of their misery, does not, however, ultimately remove it. This probably constitutes that pleasure in madness, which, it is said, none but mad persons know.

At length she stood, and, for a long time seemed musing upon various and apparently contrasted topics, for she sometimes smiled like a girl at play, and sometimes relapsed into darkness of mood and pain, and incoherency. But after passing through these rapid changes for many minutes, she suddenly exclaimed in a low but earnest voice, "Where is *he?*"

"Where is who, love?" said her mother.

"Where is he?—why does he not come?—something more than usual must prevent him, or he would not stay away so long from 'his own Jane Sinclair.' But I forgot; bless me, how feeble my memory is growing! Why this is the hour of our appointment, and I will be late unless I hurry—for who could give so gentle and affectionate a being as Charles pain?"

She immediately put on her bonnet, and was about to go abroad, when her father, gently laying his hand upon her arm, said, in a kind but admonitory voice, in which was blended a slightly perceptible degree of parental authority—

"My daughter, surely you will not go out—you are unwell."

She started slightly, paused, and looked as if trying to remember something that she had forgotten. The struggle, however, was vain—her recollection proved too weak for the task it had undertaken. After a moment's effort, she smiled sweetly in her father's face, and said—

"You would not have me break my appointment, nor give poor Charles pain, and his health, moreover, so delicate. You know he would die rather than give me a moment's anxiety. Die!—see that again—I know not what puts death into my head so often."

"Henry," said her mother, "it is probably better to let her have her own way for the present—at least until Dr. M'Cormick arrives. You and Agnes can accompany her, perhaps she may be the better for it."

"I cannot refuse her," said the old man; "at all events, I agree with you; there can, I think, be no possible harm in allowing her to go. Come, Agnes, we must, alas! take care of her."

She then went out, they walking a few paces behind her, and proceeded down the valley which we have already described in the opening of this story, until she came to the spot at the river, where she first met Osborne. Here she involuntarily stood a moment, and putting her hand to her right shoulder, seemed to miss some object, that was obviously restored to her recollection by an association connected with the place. She shook her head, and sighed several times, and then exclaimed—

"Ungrateful bird, does it neglect me too?"

Her father pressed Agnes's arm with a sensation of joy, but spoke not lest his voice might disturb her, or break the apparent continuity of her reviving memory. She

seemed to think, however, that she delayed here too long, for without taking further notice of anything she hurried on to the spot where the first disclosure of their loves had taken place. On reaching it she looked anxiously and earnestly around the copse or dell in which the yew tree, with its turf seat stood.

"How is this?—how is this?"—she murmured to herself, "he is not here!"

Both her father and Agnes observed that during the whole course of the unhappy but faithful girl's love, they never had witnessed such a concentrated expression of utter woe and sorrow as now impressed themselves upon her features.

"He has not come," said she; "but I can wait—I can wait—it will teach my heart to be patient."

She then clasped her hands, and sitting down under the shade of the yew tree, mused and murmured to herself alternately, but in such an evident spirit of desolation and despair, as made her father fear that her heart would literally break down under the heavy burden of her misery. When she had sat here nearly an hour, he approached her and gently taking her hand, which felt as cold as marble, said—

"Will you not come home, darling? Your mamma is anxious you should return to her. Come," and he attempted gently to draw her with him.

"I can wait, I can wait," she replied, "if he should come and find me gone, he would break his heart—I can wait."

"Oh do not droop, my sweet sister; do not droop so much; all will yet be well," said Agnes, weeping.

"I care for none but him—to me there is only one being in life—all else is a blank; but he will not come, and is it not too much to try the patience of a heart so fond and faithful."

"It is not likely he will come to-day," replied Agnes; "something has prevented him; but to-morrow—"

"I will seek him elsewhere," said Jane, rising suddenly; "but is it not singular, and indeed to what strange passes things may come? A young lady seeking her lover!—not over-modest certainly—nay, positively indelicate—fie upon me! Why should I thus expose myself? It is unworthy of my father's daughter, and Jane Sinclair will not do it."

She then walked a few paces homewards, but again stopped and earnestly looked in every direction, as if expecting to see the object of her love. Long indeed did she linger about a spot so dear to her; and often did she sit down again and rise to go—sometimes wringing her hands in the muteness of sorrow, and sometimes exhibiting a sense of her neglect in terms of pettish and indirect censure against Osborne for his delay. It was in one of those capricious moments that she bent her steps homewards; and as she had again to pass that part of the river where the accident occurred to the dove, Agnes and her father observed that she instinctively put her hand to her shoulder, and appeared as if disappointed. On this occasion, however, she made no observation whatever, but, much to their satisfaction, mechanically proceeded towards Springvale House, which she reached without uttering another word.

Until a short time before the arrival of Dr. M'Cormick, this silence remained unbroken. She sat nearly in the same attitude, evidently pondering on something that excited great pain, as was observable by her frequent startings, and a disposition to look wildly about her, as if with an intention of suddenly speaking. These, however, passed quickly away, and she generally relapsed into her wild and unsettled *reveries*.

When the doctor arrived, he sat with her in silence for a considerable time—listening to her incoherencies from an anxiety to ascertain, as far as possible, by what she might utter, whether her insanity was likely to be transient or otherwise. The cause of it he had already heard from report generally, and a more exact and circumstantial account on that day from her brother William.

"It is difficult," he at length said, "to form anything like an exact opinion upon the first attack of insanity, arising from a disappointment of the heart. Much depends upon the firmness of the general character, and the natural force of their common sense. If I were to judge, not only by what I have heard from this most beautiful and interesting creature, as well as from the history of her heart, which her brother gave me so fully, I would say that I think this attack will not be a long one. I am of opinion that her mind is in a state of transition not from reason but to it; and that this transition will not be complete without much physical suffering. The state of her pulse assures me of this, as does the coldness of her hands. I should not be surprised if, in the course of this very night she were attacked with strong fits. These, if they take place, will either restore her to reason or confirm her insanity. Poor girl," said the amiable man, looking on her whilst his eyes filled with tears, "he must have been a heartless wretch to abandon such a creature. My dear Jane," he added, addressing her, for he had been, and still is, familiar with the family; "I am sorry to find

"HOW IS THIS? HOW IS THIS?" SHE MURMURED TO HERSELF. "HE IS NOT HERE."
—*Jane Sinclair*, Part Third, p. 58.

that you are so unwell, but you will soon be better. Do you not know me."

"It was sworn," said the unhappy mourner; "it was sworn, and I felt this here—here"—and she placed her hand upon her heart; "I felt this little tenant of my poor bosom sink—sink, and my blood going from my cheeks when the words were uttered. More beautiful! more beautiful! why, and what is love if it is borne away merely by beauty? I loved him not for his beauty alone. I loved him because he—he—because he loved me—but at first I *did* love him for his beauty; well, he *has* found another more beautiful; and his *own* Jane Sinclair, *his* Fawn of Springvale, as he used to call me, is forgotten. But mark me—let none dare to blame *him*—he only fulfilled his destined part—the thing was foredoomed, and I knew that by my suppression of the truth to my papa, the seal of reprobation was set to my soul. Then—then it was that I felt myself a cast-away! And indeed," she added, rising up and laying the forefinger of her right hand on the palm of her left, "I would at any time sacrifice myself for his happiness; I would; yet alas," she added, sitting down and hanging her head in sorrow; "why—why is it that *I* am so miserable, when *he* is happy? Why is that, Miss Jane Sinclair—why is that?" She then sighed deeply, and added in a tone of pathos almost irresistible—"Oh that I had the wings of a dove, that I might flee away and be at rest."

She had scarcely spoken, when, by a beautiful and affecting coincidence, Ariel entered the room, and immediately flew into her bosom. She put her hand up and patted it for some time rather unconsciously than otherwise.

"Ah, you foolish bird," she at length said; "have you no better place of refuge; no calmer spot to repose upon, than a troubled and a broken heart?"

This incident of the dove, together with the mournful truth of this melancholy observation, filled every eye with tears, except those of her father, who now exhibited a spirit of calm obedience to what he considered an affliction that called upon him to act as one whose faith was not the theory of a historic Christian.

"But how," added Jane, "can I be unhappy with the Paraclete in my bosom? The Paraclete—oh that I were not reprobate and foredoomed—then indeed, he might be there—all, all by one suppression of truth—but surely my papa pities his poor girl for that. There is, I know, one that loves me, and one that pities me. My papa knows that I am foredoomed, and cannot but pity me; but where is *he*, and why does he delay so long. Hush! I will sing—

> The dawning of morn, the daylight's sinking,
> The night's long hours still find me thinking
> Of thee, thee—only thee!

She poured a spirit into these words so full of the wild sorrow of insanity, as to produce an effect that was thrilling and fearful upon those who were forced to listen to her. Nay, her voice seemed, in some degree, to awaken her own emotions, or to revive her memory to a confused perception of her situation. And in mercy it would appear that Providence unveiled only half her memory to reason; for from the effect which even that passing glimpse had upon her, it is not wrong to infer that had she seen it in its full extent, she would have immediately sunk under it.

After singing the words of Moore with all the unregulated pathos of a maniac, she wrung her hands, and was for a considerable time silent. During this interval she sighed deeply, and after a pause of half an hour arose suddenly, and seizing her father by the breast of the coat, brought him over, and placed him on the sofa beside her. She then looked earnestly into his face, and was about to speak, but her thoughts were too weak for the task, and after putting her hand to her forehead, as if to assist her recollection, she let it fall passively beside her, and hung her head in a mood, partaking at once of childish pique and deep dejection.

The doctor, who watched her closely, observed, that in his opinion the consequences of the unhappy intelligence that day communicated to her, had not yet fully developed themselves. "The storm has not yet burst," he added, "but it is quite evident that the elements for it are fast gathering. She will certainly have a glimpse of reason before the paroxysms appear, because, in point of fact, that is what will induce them."

"How soon, doctor," asked her mother, "do you think she will have to encounter this fresh and woeful trial?"

"I should be disposed to think within the lapse of twenty-four hours; certainly within forty-eight."

The amiable doctor's opinion, however, was much more quickly verified than he imagined; for Jane, whose heart yearned towards her father with the beautiful instinct of an affection which scarcely insanity itself could overcome, once more looked earnestly into his face, with an eye in which meaning and madness seemed to struggle for the mastery. She gazed at him for a long time, put her hands upon his white hair, into

which she gently twined her long white fingers, once or twice she smiled, and said something in a voice too low to be heard: but all at once she gave a convulsive start, clasped her hands wofully, and throwing herself on his bosom, exclaimed:

"Oh papa, papa—your child is lost: pray for me—pray for me.

Her sobs became too thick and violent for further utterance; she panted and wrought strongly, until at length she lay with locked teeth and clenched hands struggling in a fit which eventually, by leaving her, terminated in a state of lethargic insensibility.

For upwards of three days she suffered more than any person unacquainted with her delicacy of constitution could deem her capable of enduring. And, indeed, were it not that the aid rendered by Dr. M'Cormick was so prompt and so skilful, it is possible that the sorrows of the faithful Jane Sinclair might have here closed. On the fourth day, however, she experienced a change; but, alas, such a change as left the loving and beloved group who had hung over her couch with anxious hopes of her restoration to reason, now utterly hopeless and miserable. She arose from her paroxysms a beautiful, happy, and smiling maniac, from whose soul in mercy had been removed that susceptibility of mental pain, which constitutes the burthen and bitterness of ordinary calamity.

The first person who discovered this was her mother, who, on the fourth morning of her illness, had stolen to her bedside to see how her beloved one felt. Agnes, who would permit no other person to nurse her darling sister, lay asleep with her head reclining on the foot of the bed, having been overcome by her grief and the fatigue of incessant watching. As her mother stooped down to look into the sufferer's face, her heart bounded with delight on seeing Jane's eyes smiling upon her with all the symptoms of recognition.

"Jane, my heart's dearest," she said, in a soothing, low inquiry, "don't you know me?"

"Yes, very well," she replied; "you are my mamma, and this is Agnes sleeping on the foot of the bed. Why does she sleep there?"

The happy mother scarcely heard her child's question, for ere the words were well uttered she laid her head down upon the mourner's bosom, in a burst of melancholy joy, and wept so loudly that her voice awakened Agnes, who, starting up, exclaimed:

"Oh, mother, mother—what is this? Is —is our darling gone at last! Jane gone:" she said, "No, no—she must not—she would not leave her Agnes. Oh mother—mother, is it so?"

"No, no, Agnes love; no—but may the mercy of God be exalted for ever, Jane knows her mamma this morning, and she knows you too, Agnes."

That ever faithful sister no sooner heard the words, than a smile of indescribable happiness overspread her face, which, however, became instantly pale, and the next moment she sunk down, and in a long swoon forgot both the love and sorrow of her favorite sister. In little more than a minute the family were assembled in the sick-room, and heard from Mrs. Sinclair's lips the history, as she thought, of their beloved one's recovery. Agnes was soon restored, and indeed it would be impossible to witness a scene of such unexpected delight, as that presented by the rejoicing group which surrounded the bed of the happy—alas, *too* happy, Jane Sinclair.

"Is it possible, my dear," said her father, "that our darling is restored to her sense and recollection?"

"Try her, Henry," said the proud mother.

"Jane, my love, do you not know me?" he asked.

"To be sure, papa; to be sure," she replied smiling.

"And you know all of us, my heart's treasure?"

"Help me up a little," she replied; "now I will show you: you are my papa—there is my mamma—that is William—and Maria there will kiss me."

Maria, from whose eyes gushed tears of delight, flew to the sweet girl's bosom.

"But," added Jane, "there is another—*another* that must come to my bosom and *stay* there—Agnes!

"I am here, my own darling," replied Agnes, stooping and folding her arms about the beautiful creature's snow-white neck, whilst she kissed her lips with a fervor of affection equal to the delight experienced at her supposed recovery.

"There now, Agnes, you are to sleep with me to-night: but I want my papa. Papa, I want you."

Her father stood forward, his mild eyes beaming with an expression of delight and happiness.

"I am here, my sweet child."

"You ought to be a proud man, papa; a proud man: although I say it, that ought *not* to say it, you are father to the most beautiful girl in Europe. Charles Osborne has traveled Europe, and can find none at all so beautiful as the Fawn of Springvale, and so he is coming home one of these days

to marry me, because, you know, *because* he could find none else *so* beautiful. If he had —if he had—you know—*I*, you may be assured, would not be the girl of his choice. Yet I would marry him still, if it were not for one thing; and that is—that I am foredoomed; a reprobate and a cast-away; predestined—predestined—and so I would not wish to drag him to hell along with me; I shall therefore act the heroic part, and refuse him. Still it is something—oh it is much—and I am proud of it, not only on my own account, but on his, to be the most beautiful girl in Europe! I am proud of it, because he would not marry if I were not."

Oh unhappy, but affectionate mourners, what—what was all you had yet suffered, when contrasted with the sudden and unexpected misery of this bitter moment. Your hearts had gathered in joy and happiness around the bed of that sweet girl, the gleams of whose insanity you had mistaken for the light of reason; and now has hope disappeared, and the darkness of utter despair fallen upon you all for ever.

"I wish to rise," she proceeded, "and to join the morning prayer; until then I shall only dress in my wrapper: after that I shall dress as becomes me. I know I have nothing to hope either in this world or the next, consequently pride in me is not a sin: the measure of my misery has been filled up; and the only interval of happiness left me, is that between this and death. Dress me, Agnes."

The pause arising from the revulsion of feeling, occasioned by the discovery of her settled insanity, was indeed an exemplification of that grief which lies too deep for tears. None of them could weep, but they looked upon her and each other, with a silent agony, which far transcended the power of clamorous sorrow.

"Children," said her father, whose fortitude, considering the nature of this his great affliction, was worthy of better days; "let us neither look upon our beloved one, nor upon each other. There," said he, pointing upwards, "let us look there. You all know how I loved—how I love *her*. You all know how she loved me; but I cast—or I strive to cast the burthen of my affliction upon Him who has borne ALL for our salvation, and you see I am tearless. Dress the dear child, Agnes, and as she desires it, let her join us at prayer, and may the Lord who has afflicted us, hearken to our supplications!"

Tenderly and with trembling hands did Agnes dress the beloved girl, and when the fair creature, supported by her two sisters, entered the parlor, never was a more divine picture of beauty seen to shine out of that cloud, with which the mysterious hand of of God had enveloped her.

At prayer she knelt as meekly, and with as much apparent devotion as she had ever done in the days of her most rational and earnest piety. But it was woful to see the blighted girl go through all the forms of worship, when it was known that the very habit which actuated her resulted from those virtues, which even insanity could not altogether repress.

When they had arisen from their knees, she again addressed Agnes in a tone of cheerful sweetness, such as she had exhibited in her happier days.

"Agnes, now for our task; and indeed you must perform it with care. Remember that you are about to dress the most beautiful girl in Europe. What a fair cast-away am I, Agnes?"

"I hope not a cast-away, Jane; but I shall dress you with care and tenderness, notwithstanding."

"Every day I must dress in my best, because when Charles returns, you know it will be necessary that I should justify his choice, by appearing as beautiful as possible."

"Give the innocent her own way," said her father; "give her, in all that may gratify the child, her own way, where it is not directly wrong to do so."

Agnes and she then went up to her room, that she might indulge in that harmless happiness, which the *fiction* of hope had, under the mercy of God, extracted from the *reality* of despair.

When the ceremony of the toilette was over, she and her sister returned to the parlor, and they could notice a slight tinge of color added to her pale cheek, by the proud consciousness of her beauty. The exertion, however, she had undergone, considering her extremely weak and exhausted state of of health was more than she could bear long. But a few minutes had elapsed after her reappearance in the parlor, when she said—

"Mamma, I am unwell; I want to be undressed, and to go to bed; I am very faint; help me to bed, mamma—and if you come and stay with me, I shall tell you every thing about my prospects in life—yes, and in death, too; because I have prospects in death—but ah," she added, shuddering, "they are dark—dark!"

Seldom, indeed, was a family tried like this family; and never was the endurance of domestic love, and its triumph over the chilling habit of affliction, more signally manifested than in the undying tenderness of their hearts and hands, in all that was necessary to her comfort, or demanded by the childish caprices of her malady.

On going upstairs, she kissed them all as usual, but they then discovered, for the first time, in all its bitterness, what a dark and melancholy enjoyment it is to kiss the lips of a maniac, who has loved us, and whom we still must love.

"Jane," said William, struggling to be firm, "kiss me, too, before you go."

"Come to me, William," said she, "for I am not able to go to you. Oh, my brother, if I did not love you, I would be very wicked."

The affectionate young man kissed her, and, as he did, the big tears rolled down his cheeks. He wept aloud.

"I never, never gave her up till now," he exclaimed; "but"—and his face darkened into deep indignation as he spoke, "we shall see about it yet, Jane dear. I shall allow a month or two—she may recover; but if I suffer this to go unav——" he paused; "I meant nothing," he added, "except that I will not despair of her yet."

About ten days restored her to something like health, but it was obvious that her constitution had sustained a shock which it could not long survive. Of this Dr. M'Cormick assured them.

"In so delicate a subject as she is," he added, "we usually find that when reason goes, the physical powers soon follow it. But if my opinion be correct, I think you will have the consolation of seeing her mind clear before she dies. There comes often in such cases what the common people properly, and indeed beautifully, term a light before death, and I think she will have it. As you are unanimous against putting her into a private asylum, you must only watch the sweet girl quietly, and without any appearance of vigilance, allowing her in all that is harmless and indifferent to have her own way. Religious feeling you perceive constitutes a strong feature in her case, the rest is obviously the result of the faithless conduct of Osborne. Poor girl, here she comes, apparently quite happy."

Jane entered as he spoke, after having been dressed as usual for the day, in her best apparel. She glanced for a moment at the glass, and readjusted her hair which had, she thought, got a little out of order; after which she said, smiling,

"Why should I fear comparisons? He may come as soon as he pleases. I am ready to receive him, but do you know I think that my papa and mamma are not so fond of me as they ought to be. Is it not an honor to have for their daughter a girl whose beauty is unsurpassed in Europe? I am not proud of it for my own sake, but for his."

"Jane, do you know this gentleman, dear?" said her mother.

"Oh yes; that is Dr. M'Cormick."

"I am glad to see that your health is so much improved, my dear," said the doctor.

"Oh yes;" she replied, "I am quite well—that is so far as *this* world is concerned; but for all so happy as I look, you would never guess that I am reprobate. Now could you tell me, doctor, why it is that I look so happy knowing as I do that I am foredoomed to misery?"

"No," he replied, "but you will tell us yourself."

"Why it is because I *do* know it. *Knowing the worst* is often a great consolation, I assure you. I, at least, have felt it so."

"Oh what a noble mind is lost in that sweet girl!" exclaimed the worthy physician.

"But it seems, mamma," she proceeded, "there is a report gone abroad that I am mad. I met yesterday—was it not yesterday, Agnes?—I met a young woman down on the river side, and she asked me if it were true that I was crazed with love, and how do you think I replied, mamma? I said to her, 'If you would avoid misery—misery, mark—never violate truth even indirectly.' I said that solemnly, and would have said more but that Agnes rebuked her for speaking, and then wept. Did you not weep, Agnes?"

"Oh no wonder I should," replied her sister, deeply moved; "the interview she alludes to, doctor, was one that occurred the day before yesterday between her and another poor girl in the neighborhood who is also unsettled, owing to a desertion of a still baser kind. It was becoming too affecting to listen to, and I chid the poor thing off."

"Yes, indeed, she chid her off, and the poor thing as she told me, about to be a bride to-morrow. She said she was in quest of William that they might be married, and asked me if I had seen him. If you do, she added, tell him that Fanny is waiting for him, and that as everything is ready she expects he'll come and marry her to-morrow as he promised. Now, mamma, Agnes said that although she chid her, she wept for her, but why should you weep, Agnes, for a girl who is about to become a bride to-morrow? Surely you did not weep because she was going to be made happy? Did you?"

"All who are going to become brides are not about to experience happiness, my dear," replied her sister.

"Oh, I should think so certainly, Agnes," replied Jane. "Fie, fie, dear sister Agnes, do not lay down such doctrine. Did you not see the happy girl we met yesterday—was it yesterday? But no matter, Agnes, we shall not quarrel about it. Come and walk. Good-by, my mamma; doctor, I wish you good morning," and with a grace that was

inimitable, she made him a distant, but most respectful curtsey.

"Oh!" said she, turning back, "if any stranger should arrive during my absence, mamma, send for me immediately; or stay —no, do not—let him meet me at the place appointed; I will be there."

She then took Agnes's arm, for Agnes it was who attended her in all her ramblings, and both proceeded on their every-day saunter through the adjoining fields.

A little time, indeed, proved how very accurate had been the opinion of Dr. M'Cormick; for although Jane was affected by no particular bodily complaint, yet it appeared by every day's observation that she was gradually sinking. In the meantime, three or four months elapsed without bringing about any symptom whatsoever of improvement. Her derangement flashed out into no extraordinary paroxysm, but on the contrary assumed a wild and graceful character, sometimes light and unsettled as the glancing of sunbeams on a disturbed current, and occasionally pensive and beautiful as the beams of an autumnal moon. In all the habits of the family she was most exact. Her devotional composure at prayer appeared to be fraught with the humblest piety; her attendance at Meeting was remarkably punctual, and her deportment edifying to an extreme degree. The history, too, of her insanity and its cause had gone far and wide, as did the sympathy which it excited. In all her innocent ramblings with Agnes around her father's house, and through the adjoining fields, no rude observation or unmannered gaze ever offended the gentle creature; but on the contrary, the delicate-minded peasant of the north would often turn aside from an apprehension of disturbing her, as well perhaps as out of reverence for the calamity of a creature so very young and beautiful.

Indeed, many affecting observations were made, which, could her friends have heard them, would have fallen like balm upon their broken spirits. Full of compassion they were for her sore misfortune, and of profound sympathy for the sorrows of her family.

"Alas the day, my bonnie lady! My heart is sair to see sae lovely a thing gliding about sae unhappy. Black be his gate that had the heart to leave *you*, for rank and wealth, my winsome lassie. Weary on him, and little good may his wealth and rank do him! Oh, wha would hae thocht that the peerless young blossom wad hae been withered so soon, or that the Fawn o' Springvale wad hae ever come to the like o' this. Alas! the day, too, for the friends that nurst you, my bonnie bairn!" and then the kind-hearted matron would wipe her eyes on seeing the far-loved Fawn of Springvale passing by, unconscious that the fatal arrow which had first struck her was still quivering in her side.

The fourth month had now elapsed, and Jane's malady neither exhibited any change nor the slightest symptom of improvement. William, who had watched her closely all along, saw that no hope of any such consummation existed. He remarked, too, with a bitter sense of the unprincipled injury inflicted on the confiding girl, that every week drew her perceptibly nearer and nearer to the grave. His blood had in fact long been boiling in his veins with an indignation which he could scarcely stifle. He entertained, however, a strong reverence for religion, and had Jane, after a reasonable period, recovered, he intended to leave Osborne to be punished only by his own remorse. There was no prospect, however, of her being restored to reason, and now his determination was finally taken. Nay, so deeply resolved had he been on this as an ultimate step in the event of her not recovering, that soon after Mr. Osborne's return from London, he waited on that gentleman, and declared his indignation at the treachery of his son to be so deep and implacable that he requested of him as a personal favor, to suspend all communication with the unhappy girl's family, lest he might be tempted even by the sight of any person connected with so base a man, to go and pistol him on whatever spot he might be able to find him. This, which was rather harsh to the amiable gentleman, excited in his breast more of sorrow than resentment. But it happened fortunately enough for both parties that a day or two before this angry communication, Dr. M'Cormick had waited upon the latter, and gave it as his opinion that any intercourse between the two families would be highly dangerous to Jane's state of mind, by exciting associations that might bring back to her memory the conduct of his son. The consequence was, that they saw each other only by accident, although Mr. Osborne often sent to inquire privately after Jane's health.

William having now understood that Osborne and his wife resided in Paris, engaged a friend to accompany him thither, for the purpose of demanding satisfaction for the injuries inflicted on his sister. All the necessary arrangements were accordingly made; the very day for their departure was appointed, and a letter addressed to Agnes actually written, to relieve the family from the alarm occasioned by his disappearance, when a communication from Osborne to his father, at once satisfied the indignant young man that his enemy was no longer an object for human resentment.

This requires but brief explanation. Osborne, possessing as he did, ambition, talent, and enthusiasm in a high degree, was yet deficient in that firmness of purpose which is essential to distinction in public or private life. His wife was undoubtedly both beautiful and accomplished, and it is undeniable that his marriage, with her opened to him brilliant prospects as a public man. Notwithstanding her beauty, however, their union took place not to gratify his love, but his ambition. Jane Sinclair, in point of fact, had never been displaced from his affection, for as she was in his eye the most beautiful, so was she in the moments of self-examination, the best beloved. This, however, availed the unhappy girl but little, with a man in whose character ambition was the predominant impulse. To find himself beloved by a young and beautiful woman of wealth and fashion was too much for one who possessed but little firmness and an insatiable thirst after distinction. To jostle men of rank and property out of his path, and to jostle them successfully, when approaching the heart of an heiress, was too much for the vanity of an obscure young man, with only a handsome person and good talents to recommend him. The glare of fashionable life, and the unexpected success of his addresses made him giddy, and despite an ineffaceable conviction of dishonor and treachery, he found himself husband to a rich heiress, and son-in-law to a baronet. And now was he launched in full career upon the current of fashionable dissipation, otherwise called high life. This he might have borne as well as the other votaries of polished profligacy, were it not for one simple consideration—he had neither health nor constitution, nor, to do the early lover of Jane Sinclair justice, heart for the modes and habits of that society, through the vortices of which he now found himself compelled to whirl. He was not, in fact, able to keep pace with the rapid motions of his fashionable wife, and the result in a very short time was, that their hearts were discovered to be anything but congenial—in fact anything but united. The absence of domestic happiness joined to that remorse which his conduct towards the unassuming but beautiful object of his first affection entailed upon a heart that, notwithstanding its errors, was incapable of foregoing its own convictions, soon broke down the remaining stamina of his constitution, and before the expiration of three months, he found himself hopelessly smitten by the same disease which had been so fatal to his family. His physicians told him that if there were any chance of his recovery, it must be in the efficacy of his native air; and his wife, with fashionable apathy, expressed the same opinion, and hoped that he might, after a proper sojourn at home, be enabled to join her early in the following season at Naples. Up to this period he had heard nothing of the mournful consequences which his perfidy had produced upon the intellect of our unhappy Jane. His father, who in fact still entertained hopes of her ultimate sanity, now that his son was married, deemed it unnecessary to embitter his peace by a detail of the evils he had occasioned her. But when, like her brother William, he despaired of her recovery, he considered it only an act of justice towards her and her family to lay before Charles the hideousness of his guilt together with its woful consequences. This melancholy communication was received by him the day after his physicians had given him over, for in fact the prescription of his native air was only a polite method of telling him that there was no hope. His conscience, which recent circumstances had already awakened, was not prepared for intelligence so dreadful. Remorse, or rather repentance seized him, and he wrote to beg that his father would suffer a penitent son to come home to die.

This letter, the brief contents of which we have given, his father submitted to Mr. Sinclair, whose reply was indeed characteristic of the exalted Christian, who can forget his own injury in the distress of his enemy.

"Let him come," said the old man; "our resentments have long since passed away, and why should not yours? He has now a higher interest to look to than any arising from either love or ambition. His immortal soul is at stake, and if we can reconcile him to heaven, the great object of existence will after all be secured. God forbid that our injuries should stand in the way of his salvation. Allow me," he added, "to bring this letter home, that I may read it to my family, with one exception of course. Alas! it contains an instructive lesson."

This was at once acceded to by the other, and they separated.

When William heard the particulars of Osborne's melancholy position, he of course gave up the hostility of his purpose, and laid before his friend a history of the circumstances connected with his brief and unhappy career.

"He is now a dying man," said William, "to whom this life, its idle forms and unmeaning usages, are as nothing, or worse than nothing. A higher tribunal than the guilty spirit of this world's honor will demand satisfaction from him for his baseness towards unhappy Jane. To that tribunal I leave him; but whether he live or die, I will

never look upon my insane sister, without thinking of him as a villain, and detesting his very name and memory."

If these sentiments be considered ungenerous, let it be remembered that they manifested less his resentment to Osborne, than the deep and elevated affection which he bore his sister, for whose injuries he felt much more indignantly than he would have done for his own.

Jane, however, from this period forth began gradually to break down, and her derangement, though still inoffensive and harmless, assumed a more anxious and melancholy expression. This might arise, to be sure, from the depression of spirits occasioned by a decline of health. But from whatever cause it proceeded, one thing was evident, that an air of deep dejection settled upon her countenance and whole deportment. She would not, for instance, permit Agnes in their desultory rambles to walk by her side, but besought her to attend at a distance behind her.

"I wish to be alone, dear Agnes," she said, "but notwithstanding that, I do not wish to be without you. I might have been some time ago the Queen of beauty, but now, Agnes, I am the Queen of Sorrow."

"You have had your share of sorrow, my poor stricken creature," replied Agnes, heavily.

"But there is, Agnes, a melancholy beauty in sorrow—it is so sweet to be sad. Did you ever see a single star in the sky, Agnes?"

"Yes, love, often."

"Well, that is like sorrow, or rather that is like me. Does it not always seem to mourn, and to mourn alone, but the moment that another star arises then the spell is broken, and it seems no more to mourn in the solitude of heaven."

"Agnes looked at her with sad but earnest admiration, and exclaimed in a quivering voice as she pressed her to her bosom,

"Oh Jane, Jane, how my heart loves you! The day is coming, my sister—our sweetest, our youngest, our dearest—the day is coming when we will see you no more—when your sorrows and your joys, whether real or imaginary—when all the unsettled evidences of goodness, which nothing could destroy, will be gone; and you with all you've suffered—with all your hopes and fears, will be no longer present for our hearts to gather about. Oh my sister, my sister! how will the old man live! He will not—he will not. We see already that he suffers, and what it costs him to be silent. His gait is feeble and his form is already bent since the hand of affliction has come upon you. Yet, Jane, Jane, we could bear all, provided you were permitted to remain with us! Your voice—your voice—and is the day so soon to come when we will not hear it? when our eyes will no more rest upon you? And"—added the affectionate girl, now overcome by her feelings, laying her calm sister's head at the same time upon her bosom, "and when those locks so brown and rich that your Agnes's hands have so often dressed, will be mouldering in the grave, and that face—oh, the seal of death is upon your pale, pale cheek, my sister!—my sister!" She could say no more, but kissed Jane's lips, and pressing her to her heart, she wept in a long fit of irrepressible grief.

Jane looked up with a pensive gaze into Agnes's face, and as she calmly dried her sister's tears, said:—

"Is it not strange, Agnes, that I who am the Queen of Sorrow cannot weep. I resemble some generous princess, who though rich, gives away her wealth to the needy in such abundance that she is always poor herself. I who weep not, supply you all with tears, and cannot find one for myself when I want it. Indeed so it seems, my sister."

"It is true, indeed, Jane—too true, too true, my darling."

"Agnes, I could tell you a secret. It is not without reason that I am the Queen of Sorrow."

"Alas, it is not, my sweet innocent."

"I have the secret here," said she, putting her hand to her bosom, and no one suspects that I have. The cause why I am the Queen of Sorrow is indeed here—here. But come, I do not much like this arbor somehow. There is, I think, a reason for it, but I forget it. Let us walk elsewhere."

This was the arbor of osiers in which Osborne in the enthusiasm of his passion, said that if during his travels he found a girl more beautiful, he would cease to love Jane, and to write to her—an expression which, as the reader knows, exercised afterwards a melancholy power upon her intellect.

Agnes and she proceeded as she desired, to saunter about, which they did for the most part in silence, except when she wished to stop and make an observation of her own free will. Her step was slow, her face pale, and her gait, alas, quite feeble, and evidently that of a worn frame and a broken heart.

For some time past, she seemed to have forgotten that she was a foredoomed creature, and a cast-away, at least her allusions to this were less frequent than before—a circumstance which Dr. M'Cormick said he looked upon as the most favorable symptom he had yet seen in her case.

Upon this day, however, she sauntered

about in silence, and passed from place to place, followed by Agnes; like the waning moon, accompanied by her faithful and attendant star.

After having passed a green field, she came upon the road with an intention of crossing it, and going down by the river to the yew tree, which during all her walks she never failed to visit. Here it was that, for the second time, she met poor Fanny Morgan, the unsettled victim of treachery more criminal still than that which had been practised upon herself.

"You are the bonnie Fawn of Springvale that's gone mad with love," said the unhappy creature.

"No, no," replied Jane, "you are mistaken. I am the Queen of Sorrow."

"I am to be married to-morrow," said the other. "Everything's ready, but I can't find William. Did you see him? But maybe you may, and if you do—oh speak a word for me, but one word, and tell him that all's ready, and that Fanny's waiting, and that he must not break his promise."

"You are very happy to be married to-morrow."

"Yes," replied the other smiling—"I am happy enough now; but when we are married—when William makes me his wife, people won't look down on me any longer. I wish I could find him, for oh, my heart is sick, and will be sick, until I see him. If *he* knew how I was treated, he would not suffer it. If you see him, will you promise to tell him that all's ready, and that I am waiting for him?—Will you, my bonnie lady?"

"I could tell you a secret," said Jane—"they don't know at home that I got the letter at all—but I did, and have read it—he is coming home—coming home to die—that's what makes me the Queen of Sorrow. Do you ever weep?"

"No, but they took the baby from me, and beat me—my brother John did; but William was not near to take my part?"

"Who will you have at the wedding?"

"I have no bride's maid yet—but may be you would be that for me, my bonnie lady. John said I disgraced them; but surely I only loved William. I wish to-morrow was past, and that he would remove my shame—I could then be proud, but now I cannot."

"And what are you ashamed of? It is no shame to love him."

"No, no, and all would be well enough, but that they beat me and took away the baby—my brother John did."

"But did William ever swear to you, that if he met a girl more beautiful, he would cease to love you, and to write to you?"

"No, he promised to marry me."

"And do you know why he does not?"

"If I could find him he would. Oh, if you see him, will you tell him that I'm waiting, and that all's ready?"

"You," said Jane, "have been guilty of a great sin."

"So they said, and that I brought myself to shame too. But William will take away that if I could find him."

"You told an indirect falsehood to your father—you concealed the truth—and now the hand of God is upon you. There is nothing for you now but death."

"I don't like death—it took away my baby—if they would give me back my baby I would not care—except John—I would hide from him."

"William's married to another and dying, so that *you* may become a queen of sorrow too—would you like that—sorrow is a sweet thing."

"How could he marry another, and be promised to me?"

"Is your heart cold?" inquired Jane.

"No," replied the other smiling, "indeed I am to be married to-morrow?"

"Let me see you early in the morning," said Jane—"if you do, perhaps I may give you this," showing the letter. "Your heart cannot be cold if you keep it—I carry it here," said she, putting her hand to her bosom—"but I need not, for mine will be warm enough soon."

"Mine's warm enough too," said the other.

"If William comes, you will find poison on his lips," said Jane, "and that will kill you—the poison of polluted lips would kill a thousand faithful hearts—it would—and there is nothing for treachery but sorrow. Be sorrowful—be sorrowful—it is the only thing to ease a deserted heart—it eases mine."

"But then they say you're crazed with love."

"No, no—with sorrow; but listen, never violate truth—never be guilty of falsehood; if you do, you will become unhappy; and if you do not, the light of God's countenance will shine upon you."

"Indeed it is no lie, for as sure as you stand there to-morrow is the day."

"I think I love you," said the gentle and affectionate Jane. "Will you kiss me? my sister Agnes does when I ask her."

"Why shouldn't I, my bonnie, bonnie lady? Why shouldn't I? Oh! indeed, but you are bonnie, and yet be crazed with love! Well, well, he will never comb a gray head that deserted the bonnie Fawn of Springvale."

Jane, who was much the taller, stooped,

and with a smile of melancholy, but unconscious sympathy, kissed the forlorn creature's lips, and after beckoning Agnes to follow her, passed on.

That embrace! Who could describe its character? Oh! man, man, and woman, woman, think of this!

Agnes, after Jane and she had returned home, found that a search had been instigated during their absence for the letter which Charles had written to his father. Mr. Sinclair, anxious to return it, had missed it from among his papers, and felt seriously concerned at its disappearance.

"I only got it to read to the family," said he, "and what am I to say, or what can I say, when Mr. Osborne asks me, as he will, to return it? Agnes, do you know anything of it?"

Agnes, who, from the interview between Jane and the unsettled Fanny Morgan, saw at once that it had got, by some means unknown to the family, into her sister's hands, knew not exactly in what terms to reply. She saw too, that Jane looked upon the possession of the letter as a secret, and in her presence she felt that considering her sister's view of the matter, and her state of mind, she could not, without pressing too severely on the gentle creature's sorrow, inform her father of the truth.

"Papa," said the admirable and considerate girl, "the letter I have no doubt will be found. I beg of you papa, *I* beg of you not to be uneasy about it; it *will* be found."

This she said in a tone as significant as possible, with a hope that her father might infer from her manner that Jane had the letter in question.

The old man looked at Agnes, and appeared as if striving to collect the meaning of what she said, but he was not long permitted to remain in any doubt upon the subject.

Jane approached him slowly, and putting her hand to her bosom, took out the letter and placed it upon the table before him.

"It came from *him*," said she, "and that was the reason why I put it next my heart. You know, papa, he is dying, and this letter is a message of death. I thought that such a message was more proper from him to me than to any one else. I have carried it next my heart, and you may take it now, papa. The message has been delivered, and I feel that death is here—for that is all that he and it have left me. I am the star of sorrow—pale and mournful in the lonely sky; yet," she added as she did on another occasion, "we shall not all die, but we shall be changed."

"My sweet child," said Mr. Sinclair, "I am not angry with you about the letter; I only wish you to keep your spirits up, and not be depressed so much as you are." She appeared quite exhausted, and replied not for some time; at length she said:

"Papa, mamma, have I done anything wrong? If I have tell me. Oh, Agnes, Agnes, but my heart is heavy."

"As sure as heaven is above us, Henry," whispered her mother to Mr. Sinclair, "she is upon the point of being restored to her senses."

"Alas, my dear," he replied, "who can tell? It may happen as you say. Oh how I shall bless God if it does! but still, what, what will it be but, as Dr. M'Cormick said, the light before death? The child is dying, and she will be taken from us for ever, for ever!"

Jane, whilst they spoke, looked earnestly and with a struggling eye into the countenances of those who were about her; but again she smiled pensively, and said:

"I am—I am the star of sorrow, pale and mournful in the lonely sky. Jane Sinclair is no more—the Fawn of Springvale is no more—I am now nothing but sorrow. I *was* the queen, but now I am the *star* of sorrow. Oh! how I long to set in heaven!"

She was then removed to bed, where with her mother and her two sisters beside her, she lay quiet as a child, repeating to herself—"I am the star of sorrow, pale and mournful in the lonely sky; but now I know that I will soon set in heaven. Jane Sinclair is no more—the Fawn of Springvale is no more. No—I am now the star of sorrow!" The melancholy beauty of the sentiment seemed to soothe her, for she continued to repeat these words, sometimes aloud and sometimes in a sweet voice, until she fell gently asleep.

"She is asleep," said Agnes, looking upon her still beautiful but mournful features, now, indeed composed into an expression of rooted sorrow. They all stood over the bed, and looked upon her for many minutes. At length Agnes clasped her hands, and with a suffocating voice, as if her heart would break, exclaimed, "Oh mother, mother," and rushed from the room that she might weep aloud without awakening the afflicted one who slept.

Another week made a rapid change upon her for the worse, and it was considered necessary to send for Dr. M'Cormick, as from her feebleness and depression they feared that her dissolution was by no means distant, especially as she had for the last three days been confined to her bed. The moment he saw her, his opinion confirmed their suspicions.

"Deal gently with her now," said he; "a

fit or a paroxysm of any kind would be fatal to her. The dear girl's unhappy race is run—her sands are all but numbered. This moment her thread of life is not stronger than a gossamer." Ere his departure on that occasion, he brought Mr. Sinclair aside and thus addressed him:

"Are you aware, sir, that Mr. Osborne's son has returned."

"Not that he has actually returned," replied Mr. Sinclair, "but I know that he is daily expected."

"He reached his father's house," continued the doctor, "early yesterday; and such a pitiable instance of remorse as he is I have never seen, and I hope never shall. His cry is to see your daughter, that he may hear his forgiveness from her own lips. He says he cannot die in hope or in happiness, unless she pardons him. This, however, must not be—I mean an interview between them—for it would most assuredly prove fatal to himself; and should she see him only for a moment, that moment were her last."

"I will visit the unhappy young man myself," said her father; "as for an interview it cannot be thought of—even if they could bear it, Charles forgets that he is the husband of another woman, and that, consequently, Jane is nothing to him—and that such a meeting would be highly—grossly improper."

"Your motives, though perfectly just, are different from mine," said the doctor—"I speak merely as a medical man. He wants not this to hurry him into the grave—he will be there soon enough."

"Let him feel repentance towards God," said the old man heavily—"towards my child it is now unavailing. It is my duty, as it shall be my endeavor, to fix this principle in his heart."

The Doctor then departed, having promised to see Jane on the next day but one. This gentleman's opinion, however, with respect to his beautiful patient, was not literally correct; still, although she lingered longer than could naturally be anticipated from her excessive weakness, yet he was right in saying that her thread of life resembled that of the gossamer.

In the course of the same evening, she gave the first symptom of a lucid interval; still in point of fact her mind was never wholly restored to sanity. She had slept long and soundly, and after awaking rang the bell for some one to come to her. This was unusual, and in a moment she was attended by Agnes and her mother.

"I am very weak, my dear mamma," said she, "and although I cannot say that I feel any particular complaint—I speak of a bodily one—yet I feel that my strength is gone, and that you will not be troubled with your poor Jane much longer."

"Do not think so, dear love, do not think so," replied her mother; "bear up, my darling, bear up, and all may yet be well."

"Agnes," said she, "come to me. I know not—perhaps—dear Agnes——"

She could utter no more. Agnes flew to her, and they wept in each other's arms for many minutes.

"I would be glad to see my papa," she said, "and my dear Maria and William. Oh mamma, mamma, I suspect that I have occasioned you all much sorrow."

"No, no, no—but more joy now, my heart's own treasure, a thousand times more joy than you ever occasioned us of sorrow. Do not think it, oh, do not think it."

Her father, who had just returned from visiting Charles Osborne, now entered her bed-room, accompanied by William and his two daughters—for Agnes had flown to inform them of the happy turn which had taken place in Jane's malady. When he entered, she put her white but wasted hand out, and raised her head to kiss him.

"My dear papa," said she, "it is so long, I think, since I have seen you; and Maria, too. Oh, dear Maria, come to me—but you must not weep, dear sister. Alas, Maria," —for the poor girl wept bitterly—"Oh, my sister, but your heart is good and loving. William"—she kissed him, and looking tenderly into his face, said,

"Why, oh, why are you all in tears? Imitate my papa, dear William. I am so glad to see you! Papa, I have been—I fear I have been—but, indeed, I remember when I dreaded as much. My heart, my heart is heavy when I think of all the grief and affliction I must have occasioned you; but you will all forgive your poor Jane, for you know she would not do so if she could avoid it. Papa, how pale and careworn you look! as, indeed, you all do. Oh, God help me. I see, I see—I read on your sorrowful faces the history of all you have suffered on my account."

They all cherished, and petted, and soothed the sweet creature; and, indeed, rejoiced over her as if she had been restored to them from the dead.

"Papa, would you get me the Bible," she continued. "I wish if possible to console you and the rest: and mamma, you will think when I am gone of that which I am about to show you; think of it all of you, for indeed an early death is sometimes a great blessing to those who are taken away. Alas! who can say when it is *not?*"

They assisted her to sit up in the bed,

and after turning over the leaves of the Bible, she read in a voice of low impressive melody the first verse of the fifty-seventh chapter of Isaiah.

"The righteous perisheth, and no man taketh it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, *none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* HE SHALL ENTER INTO PEACE."

"Oh! many a death," she continued, "is wept for and lamented by friends and relatives, who consider not that those for whom they weep *may* be taken away from the *evil to come.* I feel that I am unable to speak much, but it is your Jane's request, that the consolation to be found, not only in this passage, but in this book, may be applied to your hearts when I am gone."

This effort, slight as it was, enfeebled her much, and she lay silent for some time; and such was their anxiety, neither to excite nor disturb her, that although their hearts were overflowing they restrained themselves, so far as to permit no startling symptoms of grief to be either seen or heard. After a little time, however, she spoke again:—

"My poor bird," said she, "I fear I have neglected it. Dear Agnes would you let me see it—I long to see it." Agnes in a few minutes returned and placed the bird in her bosom. She caressed it for a short time, and then looking at it earnestly said—

"Is it possible, that you too, my Ariel, are drooping?"

This indeed was true. The bird had been for some time past as feeble and delicate as if its fate were bound up with that of its unhappy mistress—whether it was that the sight of it revived some recollection that disturbed her, or whether this brief interval of reason was as much as exhausted nature could afford on one occasion, it is difficult to say; but the fact is, that after looking on it for some time, she put her hand to her bosom and asked, "Where, where is the letter?"

"What letter, my darling?" said her father.

"Is not Charles unhappy and dying?" she said.

"He is ill, my love," said her father, "but not dying, we trust."

"It is not here," she said, searching her bosom, "it is not here—but it matters nothing now—it was a message of death, and the message has been delivered. Sorrow—sorrow—sorrow—how beautiful is that word—there is but one other in the language that surpasses it, and that is *mourn.* Oh! how beautiful is that too—how delicately expressive. *Weep* is violent; but mourn, the gradual but tearless grief that wastes gently—that disappoints death, for we die not but only cease to be. I am the star of sorrow, pale and mournful in the lonely sky—well, that is one consolation—when I set I shall set in heaven."

They knew by experience that any attempt at comfort would then produce more evil than good. For near two hours she uttered to herself in a low chant, "I am the star of sorrow, etc.," after which she sank as before into a profound slumber.

Her intervals of reason, as death approached, were mercifully extended. Whilst they lasted, nothing could surpass the noble standard of Christian duty by which her feelings and moral sentiments were regulated. For a fortnight after this, she sank with such a certain but imperceptible approximation towards death that the eyes even of affection could scarcely notice the gradations of its approach.

During this melancholy period, her father was summoned upon an occasion which was strongly calculated to try the sincerity of his Christian professions. Not a day passed that he did not forget his own sorrows, and the reader knows how heavily they pressed upon him—in order to prepare the mind of his daughter's destroyer for the awful change which death was about to open upon his soul. He reasoned—he prayed—he wept—he triumphed—yes, he triumphed, nor did he ever leave the death-bed of Charles Osborne, until he had succeeded in fixing his heart upon that God "who willeth not the death of a sinner."

A far heavier trial upon the Christian's fortitude, however, was soon to come upon him. Jane, as the reader knows, was *now* at the very portals of heaven. For hours in the day she was perfectly rational; but again she would wander into her chant of sorrow, as much from weakness as from the original cause of her malady; for upon this it is difficult if not impossible to determine.

On the last evening, however, that her father ever attended Charles Osborne, he came home as usual, and was about to inquire how Jane felt, when Maria come to him with eyes which weeping had made red, and said—

"Oh papa—I fear—we all fear, that—I cannot utter it—I cannot—I cannot—Oh papa, at last the hour we fear is come."

"Remember, my child, that you are speaking," said this heroic Christian, "remember that you are speaking to a Christian father, who will not set up his affections, nor his weaknesses, nor his passions against the will of God."

"Oh, but papa—Jane, Jane"—she burst into bitter tears for more than a minute, and

then added—"Jane, papa, is dying—*leaving us at last!*"

"Maria," said he, calmly, "leave me for some minutes. You know not, dear child, what my struggles have been. Leave me now—this is *the trial* I fear—and now must I, and so must you all—but now must *I*—— Oh, leave me, leave me."

He knelt down and prayed; but in less than three minutes, Agnes, armed with affection—commanding and absolute it was from that loving sister—came to him.

She laid her hand upon his arm, and pressed it. "*Papa!*"—"I know it," said he, "she is going; but, Agnes, we must be *Christians.*"

"We must be *sisters*, papa; and ah, papa, surely, surely this is a moment in which the father may forget the Christian. Jesus wept for a stranger; what would He not have done for a brother or a sister?"

"Agnes, Agnes," said he, in a tone of sorrow, inexpressibly deep, "is this taxing *me* with want of affection for—for—"

She flung herself upon his breast. "Oh, papa, forgive me, forgive me—I am not capable of appreciating the high and holy principles from which you act. Forgive me; and surely if you ever forgave me on any occasion, you will on this."

"Dear Agnes," said he, "you scarcely ever required my forgiveness, and less now than ever—even if you had. Come—I will go; and may the Lord support and strengthen us all! Your mother—your poor mother!"

On entering the room of the dying girl, they found her pale cheek laid against that of her other parent, whose arms were about her, as if she would hold them in love and tenderness for ever. When she saw them approach, she raised her head feebly, and said—

"Is that my papa? my beloved papa?"

The old man raised his eyes once more to heaven for support—but for upwards of half a minute the muscles of his face worked with power that evinced the full force of what he suffered—

"I am here, I am here," he at length said, with difficulty.

"And that is Agnes?" she inquired. "Agnes, come near me; and do not be angry, dear Agnes that I die on mamma's bosom and not on yours."

Agnes could only seize her pale hand and bathe it in tears. "Angry with you—you living angel—oh, who ever was, or could be, my sister!"

"You all love me too much," she said. "Maria, it grieves me to see your grief so excessive—William, oh why, why will you weep so? Is it because I am about to leave the pains and sorrows of this unhappy life, and to enter into peace, that you all grieve thus bitterly. Believe me—and I know this will relieve my papa's heart—and all your hearts—will it not yours, my mamma?—it is this—your Jane, your own Jane IS NOT AFRAID TO DIE. Her hopes are fixed on the Rock of Ages—the Rock of her salvation. I know, indeed, that my brief existence has been marked at its close with care and sorrow; but these cares and sorrows have brought me the sooner to that place where all tears shall be wiped from my eyes. Let my fate, too, be a warning to young creatures like myself, never to suffer their affection for any object to overmaster their sense and their reason. I cherished the passion of my heart too much, when I ought to have checked and restrained it—and now, what is the consequence? Why, that I go down in the very flower of my youth to an early grave."

Agnes caught the dear girl's hands when she had concluded, and looking with a breaking heart into her face, said—

"And oh, my sister, my sister, are you leaving us—are you leaving us for ever, my sister? Life will be nothing to me, my Jane, without you—how, how will your Agnes live?"

"I doubt we are only disturbing our cherished one," said her father. "Let our child's last moments be calm—and her soul—oh let it not be drawn back from its hopes, to this earth and its affections."

"Papa, pray for me, and they will join with you—pray for your poor Jane while it is yet time—the prayer of the righteous availeth much."

Earnest, indeed, and melancholy, was that last prayer offered up on behalf of the departing girl. When it was concluded there was a short silence, as if they wished not to break in upon what they considered the aspirations of the dying sufferer. At length the mother thought she felt her child's cheek press against her own with a passive weight that alarmed her.

"Jane, my love," said she, "do you not feel your soul refreshed by your father's prayer?"

No answer was returned to this, and on looking more closely at her countenance of sorrow, they found that her gentle spirit had risen on the incense of her father's prayer to heaven. The mother clasped her hands, whilst the head of her departed daughter still lay upon her bosom.

"Oh God! oh God!" said she, "our idol is gone—is gone!"

"Gone!" exclaimed the old man; "now, oh Lord, surely—surely the father's grief may be allowed," and he burst, as he spoke, into a paroxysm of uncontrollable sorrow.

"And what am I to do—who am—oh woe, woe—who *was* her mother?"

To the scene that ensued, what pen could do justice—we cannot, and consequently leave it to the imagination of our readers, whose indulgence we crave for our many failures and errors in the conduct of this melancholy story.

Thus passed the latter days of the unhappy Jane Sinclair, of whose life nothing more appropriate need be said, than that which she herself uttered immediately before her death:

"Let my fate be a warning to young creatures like myself, never to suffer their affection for any object to overmaster their sense and their reason. I cherished the passion of my heart too much, when I ought to have checked and restrained it—and now, what is the consequence? Why, that I go down in the very flower of my youth to an early grave."

On the day after her dissolution, an incident occurred, which threw the whole family into renewed sorrow:—Early that morning, Ariel, her dove, was found dead upon her bosom, as she lay out in the composure of death.

"Remove it not," said her father; "it shall be buried with her;" and it was accordingly placed upon her bosom in the coffin.

Seldom was a larger funeral train seen, than that which attended her remains to the grave-yard; and rarely was sorrow so deeply felt for any being so young and so unhappy, as that which moved all hearts for the fate of the beautiful but unfortunate Jane Sinclair—the far-famed Fawn of Springvale.

One other fact we have to record: Jane's funeral had arrived but a few minutes at the grave, when another funeral train appeared slowly approaching the place of death. It was that of Charles Osborne!

The last our readers may have anticipated. From the day of Jane's death the heart of the old man gradually declined. He looked about him in vain for his beloved one. Night and day her name was never out of his mouth. It is true he prayed, he read, he availed himself of all that the pious exercises of a Christian man could contribute to the alleviation of his sorrow. But it was in vain. In vain did his wife, son, and daughters strive to soothe and console him. The old man's heart was broken. His beloved one was gone, and he felt that he could not remain behind her. A gradual decay of bodily strength, and an utter breaking down of his spirits, brought about the consummation which they all dreaded. At the expiration of four months and a half, the old man was laid in the same grave that contained his beloved one—and he was happy.

LHA DHU;

OR, THE DARK DAY.

THERE is no country in the world whose scenery is more sweetly diversified, or more delicately shaded away into that exquisite variety of surface which presents us with those wavy outlines of beauty that softly melt into each other, than is that of our own green island. Alas! how many deep valleys, wild glens, green meadows, and pleasant hamlets, lie scattered over the bosom of a country, peopled by inhabitants who are equally moved by the impulses of mirth and sorrow; each valley, and glen, and pleasant hamlet marked by some tearful remembrance of humble calamity of which the world never hears. How little do its proud nobility know of the fair and still beauty which marks the unbroken silence of its most delightful retreats, or of the unassuming records of love or sorrow, which pass down through a single generation, and are soon lost in the rapid stream of life. We do not love to remember sorrow, but its traces, notwithstanding, are always the most uneffaceable, and, what is strange as true, its mournful imprint remains ever the longest upon the heart that is most mirthful. We talk not now of the hollow echo, like mirth, which comes from thousands only because the soul is wanting. No; but we say that as the diamond is found in the darkness of the mine, as the lightning shoots with most vivid flashes from the gloomiest cloud, so does mirthfulness frequently proceed from a heart susceptible of the deepest melancholy. Many and true are the simple tales of Irish life which could prove this. Many a fair laughing girl who has danced in happiness, light as a mote in the sunbeam, has been suddenly left in darkness, bowed down in youth and beauty to the grave, and though the little circle of which she was the centre may have been disturbed by her untimely fate, yet in brief space, except to a few yearning and stricken hearts who could *not* forget her who was once their pride and hope, her memory has passed away like a solitary bird, viewed as it goes over us, and followed wistfully, by the eye, until by degrees it lessens and lessens—becomes dim—then fades into a speck, and ultimately melts into the blue distance of heaven. One such a "simple annal," brought about by the inscrutable hand that guides the destinies of life, we are now about to present to our readers. Were it the mere creation of our fancy, it might receive many of those embellishments at our hand with which we scruple not to adorn the shadowy idealities of fiction. It is, however, one of those distressing realities so often produced by the indulgence of vehement passion, that we are compelled by the melancholy severity of its truth to give the details of, not, alas, as we could have wished them to happen, but simply as they occurred.

The village of *Ballydhas* was situated in the bosom of as sweet a valley as ever gladdened the eye and the heart of a man to look upon. Contentment, peace, and prosperity, walked step by step with its happy inhabitants. The people were marked by a pastoral simplicity of manners, such as is still to be found in some of the remote and secluded hamlets of Ireland. The vale was green and shelving, having its cornfields, its pasturage, and its patches of fir, poplar, and mountain-ash intermingled, and creeping up on each side in wild but quiet beauty to the very mountain tops that enclosed it. At the head of the glen reposed a small clear sheet of water, as calm and unruffled as the village itself. By this sweet lake was fed the pure stream which murmured down between the banks, here and there opened, and occasionally covered by hazel, black-thorn, or birches. As it approached the village the scenery about it became more soft and tranquil. The banks spread away into meadows flower-spangled and green; the fields became richer; the corn waved to the soft breezes of summer; the noon-day smoke of the dinner fires rose up, and was gently borne away to the more wide-spread scene of grandeur and cultivation that lay in the champaign country below it. On each side of the glen were masses of rock and precipices, just large

enough to give sufficient wildness and picturesque beauty to a view which in itself was calm and serene. In the distance about a mile to the north, stood out a bold but storm-vexed headland, that heaved back the mighty swell of the Atlantic, of which a glimpse could be caught from an eminence above the village. Nothing indeed could be finer than the booming fury of the giant billows, as they shivered themselves into spray, and thundered around the gloomy caverns of the headland, especially when constrasted with the calm sense of peace and security which reposed upon the neat white village in the glen.

How sweet of a summer Sabbath morning to sit upon the brow of this delightful valley, and contemplate in the light dreams of a happy heart its humble images of all that is pure, and peaceful, and soothing in life; the little bustle of preparation for the cheerful but solemn duties of the day; the glad voices of bright-faced boys and girls, eager to get on their Sunday clothes; the busy stirring about of each tucked-up matron, washing, and combing, and pinning her joyous little ones; and the contented father now dressed, placidly smoking his after-breakfast pipe, looking upon their little cares, and their struggles for precedence in being decked out with their humble finery; now rebuking an elder boy for his impatience and want of consideration in not allowing his juniors to get first dressed, and again soothing a younger one until *his* turn came.

"Barney, troth you ought to have more sinse, avick, than to be quarrellin' wid poor Jemmy about gettin' an you. Don't you know he's but a child, an' must of coorse get his little things an before you, espishially as this is the first Sunday of the crathur's new jacket an' throwsers. Blood alive, Barney, be manly, and don't make comparishment wid a *pasitah* (child). I hope you've got off your lesson in the catechiz this mornin', and that you wont have to hang down your head wid the blush of shame among the *bouchaleens* (little boys) in the chapel to-day. Go 'way, avick, and rehearse it, an' whin your mother finishes him, and Dick, and little Mary, she'll have yourself as clane as a new sixpence."

Then came the moment when the neat and well-dressed groups issued out of their happy homes, and sought in cheerful companionship with those of different creeds, their respective places of worship; for, gentle reader, the inhabitants of Ballydhas were, in point of religion, some Protestant, some Roman Catholic, and others Presbyterian. Many a time have we seen them proceed together in peace and friendship along the same road, until they separated either to church, to meeting, or to chapel; and again return on their way home, in a spirit equally cordial and kind. The demon of political discord and religious rancor had not come among them. Each class in the parish worshipped God after its own manner. All were happy, and industrious, and independent, for they had not then been taught that they were slaves and natural enemies groaning under the penal yoke of oppression.

Their fairs and markets were equally peaceful. Neither faction-fight nor party-fight ever stained the streets with blood. The whoop of strife was never raised by neighbor against neighbor, nor the coat trailed, nor the caubeen thrown up into the air to challenge an opposite faction. There was, in truth, none of all this. The people were moral and educated. Religion they attended with that decorous sense of decency which always results from a sincere perception of its obligations and influence.

Yet were they not without their sports and rustic amusements. Where the bitterness of malignity is absent, cheerfulness has full play, and candor, ever open and benevolent, is the exponent of mirth and good will. Though their fairs and markets were undisturbed by the savage violence of mutual conflict, yet were they enlivened by the harmless pastimes which throw the charm of uncorrupted life over the human heart and the innocent scenes from which it draws in its amusements. Life is harsh enough, and we are no friends to those who would freeze its genial current by the gloomy chill of ascetic severity.

Within about two miles of Ballydhas stood the market town of the parish. *It* also bore the traces of peace and happiness. Around it lay a rich fertile country, studded with warm homesteads, waving fields, and residences of a higher rank, at once elegant and fashionable. The gentry were not, it is true, of the highest class; but in lieu of that they were kind, considerate, and what was before all, *resident*. If an accidental complaint happened to be preferred by one man against another, they generally were qualified by a knowledge of their characters to administer justice between them, without the risk of being misled by misrepresentation. This prevented many complaints founded in malice or party-spirit, and consequently reduced litigation to an examination of the very few cases in which actual injury had been sustained.

Many a fair day have we witnessed in this quiet and thriving market town. And it is sweet to us—yes, intensely sweet to leave, for a moment, the hollow and slippery path-

ways of artificial life—of that unfeeling, unholy and loathsome selfishness of heart, and soul, and countenance, which marks as with a brand of infamy, the fictions of fashionable and metropolitan society, where every person and profession you meet, is a lie or a libel to be guarded against. Yes, it is pleasant to us to leave all this, and to go back in imagination to a fair day in the town of Ballaghmore. Like an annual festival, it stole upon us with many yearning wish, that time, at least for a month before, should be annihilated. And when the fair morning came, what a drifting tide of people, cows, sheep, horses, and pigs, passed on in the eager tumult of business, before our eyes. The comfortable farmer in his best gray frize; the young man in spruce corduroy breeches, home-made blue coat, and bran new hat; the tidy maiden with neat bunch of yarn, spun by her own fingers, giving sufficient proof to her bachelor that a young woman of industrious habits uniformly makes the best wife for a poor man. Various, indeed, were the classes that, in multitudinous groups, drifted towards the fair green. The spruce, well-mounted horse-jockey, with bottle-green coat closely buttoned, tight buckskin inexpressibles, long-lashed hunting-whip, and top-boots; the drover on his plump hack, pacing slowly after his fat beeves; the gentleman farmer, trundling along in his gig, or trotting smartly on a bit of half-blood. Here go a family group, the children with new hats and ruffles, grandfather a little behind, with the hand of an own pet boy or a girl in his; observe the joy of their faces; what complacent happiness on the ruddy countenance of the healthy old man. The parents are also happy, but betray the unconscious anxiety of those who love their children, and are sensible of the serious duties inseparable from their condition; the four little ones know not the cares of affection, and, consequently, their looks are full of delight, eagerness, and curiosity. What a tide of bewildered interrogatories does the fifth urchin pour upon the ear of the old grandfather, who is foolish enough to stop the whole group, in order to relate the precocious pertinency of some particular query. There goes a snug farmer, his wife, and good-looking daughters, seated upon a farm-car that is trussed with straw, covered by a blue quilt. We will wager that the "good woman" has somewhere about the premises a few cakes of hard griddle-bread, to eat when they get hungry, with a glass of punch, and, it may be, a good slice or two of excellent hung beef or bacon. But now they approach town, and the stream thickens. There go the beggars, mendicants, and impostors, showing a degree of agility rather impracticable with their respective maladies, grievous and deplorable as they all, of course, are; and toiling vehemently after them, hops "Bill i' the Bowl," pitching himself along in a copper-fastened dish, with a small stool or *creepie* supporting each hand.

But now the whole sweep of the town and fair-green open to us; tents, and standings, and tables, and roasting and boiling are all about us; for the *spoileen* fires are in operation, and many a fat sheep will be cut up, as well for those who have never tasted mutton before, as for hundreds who eat rather from hunger than curiosity. Heavens! what an astounding multitude of discordant noises all blend into one hoarse, deep, drowsy body of sound, for which we can find no suitable term. Cows lowing, sheep bleating, pigs grunting, horses neighing, men shouting, women screaming, fiddlers playing, pipes squeeling, youngsters dancing, hammering up of standings and tents, thumping of restive or lazy animals, the show-man's drum, the lottery-man's speech, the ballad-singer's squall, all come upon us; and lastly, the unheeded sweep of the death-bell, as it tells with sullen tongues that some poor mortal has for ever departed from the cares and amusements, the trade and traffic, of this transitory life.

About twelve o'clock the fair-tide is full; for that is the time in which the greatest interchange of property, and the most vigorous transactions of business, with all accompanying bustle and activity, take place. For an hour or two this continues. About three o'clock the tide is evidently on the ebb; business begins to slacken, and those who have their transactions brought to a close, meet their families and friends at the place of rendezvous—always a public house. It is now, indeed, when the heat and burden of the day have passed, and refreshment becomes both grateful and necessary, that the people fall into distinct groups for the purpose of social enjoyment. If two young folk have been for some time "coortin' one another," the "bachelor," which in Ireland means a suitor, generally contrives to bring his friends and those of his sweetheart together. The very fact of their accepting the "thrate," on either side, or both, is a good omen, and considered tantamount to a mutual consent of their respective connections. This, however, is not always so; for it often happens that a match is broken off after many a friendly compotation has been held "upon the head of it," which means upon that subject. Let the reader stand with us for a few minutes, and we will point out to him one or two groups who have met for the purpose of settling a marriage. Do you see that tall

sthreel of a fellow, who slings awkwardly along, for which reason he is nicknamed by his acquaintances "a sling-poke"? Observe the lazy grotesque repose of his three-featured face, for more it does not present, viz. —mouth, eyes, and nose. His long legs are without calves, and he is in-kneed; yet the fellow has such taste, that in order to show his shape he must needs wear breeches! Look at his coat, which was made for him about five years ago, when he was but "a slip of a boy." The thin collar only reaches to the upper part of his shoulder; and as he is what is called "crane-necked," of course the distance between his hat and the collar is incredible. The arms of the said coat are set so far in, that they appear almost to meet behind; but, on the other hand, two naked bones, each about six inches in length, project from the cuffs, which come not far below his elbows. The coat itself is what is called a jerkin; and as the buttons behind are half-way up his back, it is a matter of course that the tail, which runs rapidly to a point, is ludicrously scanty. Now, that youth, who is probably under no sense of gratitude to the graces, has put his "comedher" on the prettiest girl, with one or two exceptions, in the whole parish. The miserable pitch-fork, the longitudinal rake—we speak now in a hay-making sense—has contrived to oust half a dozen of the handsomest and best-looking fellows in the parish. How he has done this is a mystery to his acquaintances; but it is none to us—we know him. The kraken has a tongue dripping with honey—one that would smooth a newly-picked millstone. There they go, each of them laughing and cheerful, except himself; yet the fellow, though conscious of his own influence, enters the public-house as if he were going on the forlorn hope, or trailing his straggling limbs to confide his last wishes to the ear of the sheriff or hangman. He is, however, an Irishman at heart, though little indeed of the national bearing is visible in his deportment.

Here again comes a second group. Keep your eye on that good-humored, ruddy-faced young man, compact and vigorous, who is evidently the wag of his party. Observe his tight-fitting, comfortable frize, neat brogues, and breeches, on the knees of which are two double knots of silk ribbon. See with what a smart, decisive air he wears his hat—"jauntily," as Leigh Hunt would say—upon one side of his head. That fellow has a high character for gallantry, and is allowed to be "the very sorrow among the girls"—"a Brinoge," "wid an eye that 'ud steal cold praties off a dresser." He is now leading in a girl, handsome no doubt, but who, nevertheless, does not possess sixpence, or sixpence worth for her portion. Not so the sword-fish we have pointed out to you a while ago, the tail of whose short coat lay as closely to him as that of a crab. The cassoway has secured a girl who, in point of wealth and dower, will be the making of him. However, you know the secret, Solomon says that a soft answer turneth away wrath; but what will not a soft question do, when put to a pretty girl, where there is no wrath?

Here comes another party, fewer in point of number than those we have shown you; a young man, a middle-aged woman, and her two daughters—one grown, the other only about fifteen. Who is—ah!—it is not necessary to inquire. Alley Bawn Murray! Gentle reader bow with heartfelt respect to humble beauty and virtue! She is that widow's daughter, the pride of the parish, and the beloved of all who can appreciate goodness, affection, and filial piety. The child accompanying them is her sister, and that fine, manly, well-built, handsome youth is even now pledged to the modest and beautiful girl. He is the son of a wealthy farmer, some time dead; but in purity, in truth, and an humble sense of religion, their hearts are each rich and each equal.

Alas! alas! that it should be so! but we cannot control the inscrutable designs of Heaven. The spirit of our narrative must change, and our tale can henceforth breathe nothing but what is as mournful as it is true. There they pass into that public-house, true-hearted and attached; unconscious, too, poor things, of the almost present calamity that is soon to wither that noble boy and his beautiful betrothed. Their history, up to the period of their entering the public-house, is very brief and simple. Felix O'Donnell was the son of a farmer, as we have said, sufficiently extensive and industrious to be wealthy, without possessing any of the vulgar pride which rude independence frequently engrafts upon the ignorant and narrow-hearted. His family consisted of two sons and a daughter—Maura, the last-named, being the eldest, and Felix by several years the junior of his brother Hugh. Between the two brothers there was in many things a marked contrast of character, whilst in others there might be said to exist a striking similarity. Hugh was a dark-brown, fiery man when opposed, though in general quiet and inoffensive. His passions blazed out with fury for a moment, and only for a moment; for no sooner had he been borne by their vehemence into the commission of an error, that he became quickly alive to the promptings of a heart naturally affectionate and kind. In money transactions he had the

character of being a hard man; yet were there many in the parish who could declare that they found him liberal and considerate. The truth was, that he estimated money at more than its just value, without absolutely giving up his heart to its influence. When a young man, though in good circumstances, he looked cautiously about him, less for the best or the handsomest wife than the largest dower. In the speculation, so far as it was pecuniary, he succeeded; but his domestic peace was overshadowed by the gloom of his own character, and not unfrequently disturbed by the violent temper of a wife who united herself to him with an indifferent heart. He was, in short, a man more respected than loved; one of whom it was often said, "Well, well, he's a decent man, nabours—a little hard or so about money, but for all that there's worse. Sure we all have our failin's. There's one thing in him any how, that if he offinds a man he's sorry for it: ay, an' when he *does* chance to do a good turn, sorra a word ever any one hears about it from his own lips. To be sure there's a great deal of the nager in him no doubt, an' in troth he didn't take afther his own father for that. Devil a dacenter man than ould Felix O'Donnell ever broke bread."

His brother Felix, in all that was amiable and affectionate, strongly resembled him; but there the resemblance terminated. Felix was subject to none of his gloomy moods or violent outbursts of temper. He was manly, liberal, and cheerful—valued money at its proper estimate, and frequently declared, that in the choice of a wife he would never sacrifice his happiness to acquire it.

"I have enough of my own," he would say; "and when I meet the woman that my heart chooses, whether she has fortune or not, that's the girl that I will bring to share it, if she can love me."

Felix and his sister both resided together; for after his father's death he succeeded to the inheritance that had been designed for him. Maura O'Donnell was in that state of life in which we feel it extremely difficult to determine whether a female is hopeless or not upon the subject of marriage. Her humors had begun to ferment and to clear off into that thin vinegar serum which engenders the exquisite perception of human error, and the equally keen touch with which it is reproved. Time, in fact, had begun to crimp her face, and the vinegar to sparkle in her eye with that fiery gleam which is so easily lit up at five and thirty. Still she loved Felix, whose good-humor constituted him a butt for the irascible sallies of a temper more nearly allied to his brother Hugh's than his own. He was her younger brother, too, of whom she was justly proud; and she knew that Felix, in spite of the pungency of her frequent reproofs, loved her deeply, as was evident by the many instances of his considerate attention in bringing her home presents of dress, and in contributing, as far as lay in his power, to her comfort.

The world, indeed, is too much in the habit of drawing distorted inferences from the transient feuds that occasionally appear in domestic life. It would be hard to find a family in which they do not sometimes occur; and when noticed by strangers, it is both uncharitable and unjust to conclude that there is an absence of domestic affection in the hearts of those who, after all, prove no more than that they are subject to the errors and passions of human nature, like their fellow creatures. No sister, for instance, ever loved another with stronger affection than poor Maura did her brother Felix, notwithstanding the repeated scoldings which, for very trivial causes, he experienced at her tongue. Woe, keen and scathing, be to those who dared, in her presence to utter an insinuation against him.

"If she abused him, she only did it for his good, and because she loved him; an' good right she had to love him, for a better brother never breathed the breath of life. Wasn't he a mere boy, only one-and-twenty years come next Lammas; and surely it stood to reason that he wanted sometimes to be checked and scolded too. He had neither father or mother to guide him, poor boy; and who would guide him, and advise him too, if his own sister wouldn't do it? Only one-and-twenty, and six feet in his shoes; but no *punhial*, no cabbage upon two potsticks, like some she knew, that were ready enough to give boy a harsh word when they ought to look nearer home, and—may-be—but *she* said nothing—as God forbid that she'd make or meddle with any neighbor's character; but *still*, may-be, they'd find enough to blame at home, if they'd open their eyes to their own failings, as well as they do to the failings of their neighbors."

Another circumstance also strongly characteristic of the woman's heart, was evinced in the high and vigorous tone she assumed towards Hugh, whenever, in any of his dark moods, he happened to take Felix to task. These fierce encounters, however, never occurred in Felix's presence; for she thought that to take his part *then*, would remove, in a great degree, the 'vantage ground on which she stood with reference to himself. Difficult, indeed, was the part she found herself compelled to play on these delicate occasions. She could not, as a moralist and disciplinarian, proverbially strict, seem in any degree

to countenance the charges brought by Hugh against Felix; nor, on the other hand, was it without a command of temper and heroic self-denial, rarely attained, that she was able to keep her indignation against Hugh pent up within decorous and plausible limits. During the remonstrance of the latter, she usually pushed the charges against Felix into the notorious failings of Hugh himself, and this she did in a tone of irony so dry and cutting, that Hugh was almost in every case, as willing to abandon the attack as he had been to begin it.

"Ay, indeed," she would proceed—"troth an' conscience, Hugh, *avourneen*"—avourneen being pronounced with a civil bitterness that was perfectly withering—"troth an' conscience, Hugh, avourneen, it's truth you're speaking, and not only that, Hugh *darling*, but he's as dark as the old *dioul* betimes, so he is, and runs into such fits of blackness and anger, for no reason—Hugh, *dheelish*, for no reason in life, man alive. Are, you listening, Hugh? for it's to *you* I'm speaking, dear—for no reason in life, acushla, only because he's a dirty, black *bodagh*, that his whole soul and body's not worth the scrapings of a pot in a hard summer. Did you hear me, Hugh jewel? Felix, go out, avourneen, ye onbiddable creature, and look after them ditchers, and see that they don't play upon us to-day, as they did on Saturday."

Felix, who understood the sister's irony, went out on every such occasion with perfect good will, and indulged in an uncontrollable fit of laughter at her masked attack upon his brother.

No sooner was he gone than Hugh either fled at once, or gathered himself up against the vehement assault he knew she was about to make upon him.

"Why then, Hugh O'Donnell, ar'n't you a dirty, black bodagh, to go to open upon the poor boy for no reason in life? What did he do that you should abuse him, you nager you? and it's well known that you're a nager, and that your heart's in the shillin'. Oh! it's long before you'd go to fair or market and bring home the best gown, or shawl, or mantle in it to the only sister you have, as *he* does. Ay, ar'n't you the cream of a dirty, black bodagh, for to go to attack the poor boy only for speaking to a dacent and a purty girl that hasn't a stain upon her name, or upon the name of one of her seed, breed, or generation, you miserly nager. I wouldn't say that before *him*, because I want to keep him under me; but where, I say, could you get so fine a young slip as poor Felix is? My soul to the dev—God pardon me! I was going to say what I oughtn't to say: but I tell you, Hugh, that you must quit of it; he's the only brother we have, and it's the least we should be kind to him."

During this harangue poor Hugh's flush of passion usually departed from him. As we said, he loved his only brother; and so vivid were Maura's representations of his virtues, that Hugh, his passion having subsided, was usually borne away by the pathos with which she closed her observations respecting him. A burst of tears always concluded the dialogue on her part, and deep regret on the part of Hugh; for, in fact, the charges against Felix were such only as none except they themselves in the very exuberance of their affection, would think of bringing against him.

The reader is already acquainted with the allusion made by Maura to the "dacent and purty girl that hasn't a stain upon her name, or upon the name of one of her seed, breed, or generation." This "purty" girl is no other than Alley Bawn Murray; and although Maura, from a sheer spirit of contradiction, spoke of her to Hugh in a favorable point of view, yet nothing could be more obstinately bitter than her opposition to such a match on the part of Felix.

This, however, is human nature. To those who cannot understand such a character, we offer no apology—to the few who do, none is necessary.

The courtship of Alley Bawn and Felix had arrived, on the fair-day of Ballaghmore, to a crisis which required decision on the part of the wooer. They went in, as we have shown the reader, to a public-house Their conversation, which was only such as takes place in a thousand similar instances, we do not mean to detail. It was tender and firm on the part of Felix, and affectionate between him and her. With that high pride, which is only another name for humility, she urged him to forget her, "if it was not plasin' to his frinds. You know, Felix," she continued, "that I am poor and you are rich, an' I wouldn't wish to be dragged into a family that couldn't respect me."

"Alley dear," replied Felix, "I know that both Hugh and Maura love me in their hearts; and although they make a show of anger in the beginnin', yet they'll soon soften, and will love you as they do me."

"Well, Felix," replied Alley, "my mother and you are present; if my mother says I ought——"

"I do, darling," said her mother; "that is, I can't feel any *particular* objection to it. Yet somehow my mind is troubled. I know that what he says is what will happen; but, for all that—och, Felix, aroon, there's something over me about the same match—I don't know—I'm willin' an' I'm not willin'."

They arose to depart; and as both families lived in the beautiful village of Ballydhas, which we have already described to the reader, of course their walk home was such as lovers could wish.

Evening had arrived; the placid summer sun shone down with a mild flood of light upon Ballaghmore and the surrounding country. There was nothing in the evening whose external phenomena could depress any human heart. The ocean lay like a mirror, on which the beams of the sun glistened in magnificent shafts, in whatsoever position you looked upon it. Not a wave or a ripple broke the expansive sheet, that stretched away till it melted into the dipping sky; yet to the *ear* its mysterious and deep murmurs were audible, and the lonely eternal sobbing of the awful sea, struck upon the heart of the superstitious mother with a sense of fear and calamity. Felix and Alley went before them, and the conversation which we are about to detail, took place between herself and her youngest daughter.

"Susy, darlin'," said she, "you see the happy pair before us; but why is it, acushla, that my heart is sunk when I think of their marriage? Do you hear that *say?* There's not a wave on it, but still it's angry, if one can judge by its voice. Darlin' it's *a bad sign*, for the same *say* isn't *always* so. Sometimes it is as asy as a sleepin' baby, and sometimes, although its waves are quiet enough, it looks like a murderer asleep. Now it breathes heavily avourneen, as if all was not right. Susy, darlin', I'm afeard, I say, that it's *a bad sign.*"

"Mother dear," replied Susy, "what makes you speak that way? Sure it wouldn't be the little sup o' punch that Felix made you take that 'ud get into your head!"

"No, darlin'! Look at the pair before us; there they go, the pride, both o' them, God knows, of the whole parish; but still when I think of the bitterness of Felix's friends, Susy, I can't help being afeard. His brother Hugh is a dark man, and his sister Maura is against it. God pity them! It's a cruel world, acushla, when people like them can't do as they'd wish to do. But, Susy, you're a child, and knows nothing at all about it."

Felix and Alley walked on, unconscious of the ominous forebodings which the superstition of the affectionate woman prompted her to utter. The arrangements for their marriage were on that night concluded, and the mother, after some feebly expressed misgivings, at which Felix and Alley laughed heartily, was induced, to consent that on the third Sunday following they should be joined in wedlock. Had Felix been disposed to conceal his marriage from Hugh and Maura, at least until the eve of its occurrence, the publishing of their banns in the chapel would have, of course, disclosed it. When his sister heard that the arrangements were completed, she poured forth a torrent of abuse against what she considered the folly and simplicity of a mere boy, who allowed himself to be caught in the snares of an artful girl, with nothing but a handsome face to recommend her. Felix received all this with good humor, and replied only in a strain of jocularity to every thing she said.

Hugh, on the other hand, contented himself with a single observation. "Felix," said he, "I won't see you throw yourself away upon a girl that is no fit match for you. If you *can't* take care of yourself, *I will.* Once for all, I tell you that *this marriage must not take place.*"

As he uttered these words his dark brows were bent, and his eyes flashed with a gleam of that ungovernable passion for which he was so remarkable. Felix, at all times peaceable, and always willing to acknowledge his elder brother's natural right to exercise a due degree of authority over him, felt that this was stretching it too far. Still he made no reply, nor indeed did Hugh allow him time to retort, had he been so disposed. They separated without more words, each resolved to accomplish his avowed purpose.

The opposition of Hugh and Maura to his marriage, only strengthened Felix's resolution to make his beloved and misrepresented Alley Bawn, the rightful mistress of his hearth, as she already was of his affections. Nay, his love burned for her with a purer and tenderer flame, when he looked upon the artless girl, and thought of the cruel hearts that would make her a martyr to a spirit so worldly-minded and selfish. Their deep-rooted prejudice against her poverty, he delicately concealed from her, together with the length to which their opposition had gone. As for himself, he acted precisely as if the approaching marriage had their full sanction; he saw Alley every day, became still more deeply enamored, and heard his sister's indignant remonstrances without uttering a single syllable in reply.

At length the happy Sunday morning arrived, and never did a more glorious sun light up the beautiful valley of Ballydhas than that which shed down its smiling radiance from heaven upon their union. Felix's heart was full of that eager and trembling delight, which, where there is pure and disinterested love, always marks our emotions upon that blessed epoch in human life. Maura, contrary to her wont, was unusually silent during the whole morning; but Felix could perceive that she watched all his emo-

tions with the eye of a lynx. When the hour of going to chapel approached, he deemed it time to dress, and, for that purpose, went to a large oaken tallboy that stood in the kitchen, in order to get out his clothes. It was locked, however, and his sister told him at once, that the key, which was in her possession, should not pass into his hands that day. "No," she continued, "nor sorra the ring you'll put on the same girl with my consent. Aren't you a purty young omadhaun, you spiritless creature, to go to marry sich a *niddy-nauddhy*, when you know that the best fortunes in the glen would jump at you! Yes, faiks! to bring home that mane, useless creature, that hasn't a penny to the good! A purty farmer's wife she'll make, and purtily she'll fill my poor mother's shoes, God be good to her! A poor, unsignified, smooth-faced thing, that never did a dacent day's work out of doors, barring to shake up a cock of hay, or pull the growing of a peck of flax! Oh! thin, mother darlin', that's in glory this day! but it's a purty head of a house he's puttin' afther you; and myself, too, must knock under to the like of her, and see her put up in authority over my head. Let me alone, Felix; your laughing wont pass. The sorra kay you'll get from me to-day."

Felix, who was resolved to procure the key, saw that there was nothing for it but a little friendly violence. A good-humored struggle accordingly commenced between them—good-humored on his side, but bitter and determined on the part of Maura. Finding it difficult to secure the key, even by violence, Felix was about to give up the contest, and force the lock at once, when Hugh entered.

"What's all this?" he inquired. "What racket's this? Is it beating your sister you are? Is the young headstrong profligate beating you, Maura, eh?"

"No, Hugh, not that; but he wants the kay to deck himself up for marrying that pet of his. God knows, I'd rather he *did* beat me than do what he's going to do."

"Felix," said his brother, "I'm over you in place of your father, and I tell you that it'll cost me a sore fall, or I'll put a stop to this day's work. A purty bridegroom you are, and a 'sponsible father of a family you'll make! By my sowl, it's a horsewhip I ought to take to you, and lash all thoughts of marriage out of you. What a hurry you are in to go a shoolin' (to become the rustic *chevalier d'industrie*). You had betther provide yourself the bag and staff at once, for if you marry this portionless, good-for-nothing hussy——"

Felix's eye flashed, and, for the first time in his life, he turned a fierce glance upon his brother.

"She's *no* hussy, Hugh; and if another man said it——" he paused, for it was but the 'hectic of a moment.'

"You'd knock him down, I suppose," said Hugh. "Why don't you speak it out? Why, Maura, he's *a man* on our hands, and I suppose he'll be a bully to-morrow, or next day, and put us all under his feet, and make us all knuckle down to his poppet of a wife."

"Hugh," said Felix, "I am willin' to forget and forgive all the harshness ever you showed me, and to remimber nothing but your kindness, and you *wor* kind to me; you're my brother—my only, and my eldest brother, and I beg it as a favor to one that loves you both, that you'll not interfere in my marriage this day."

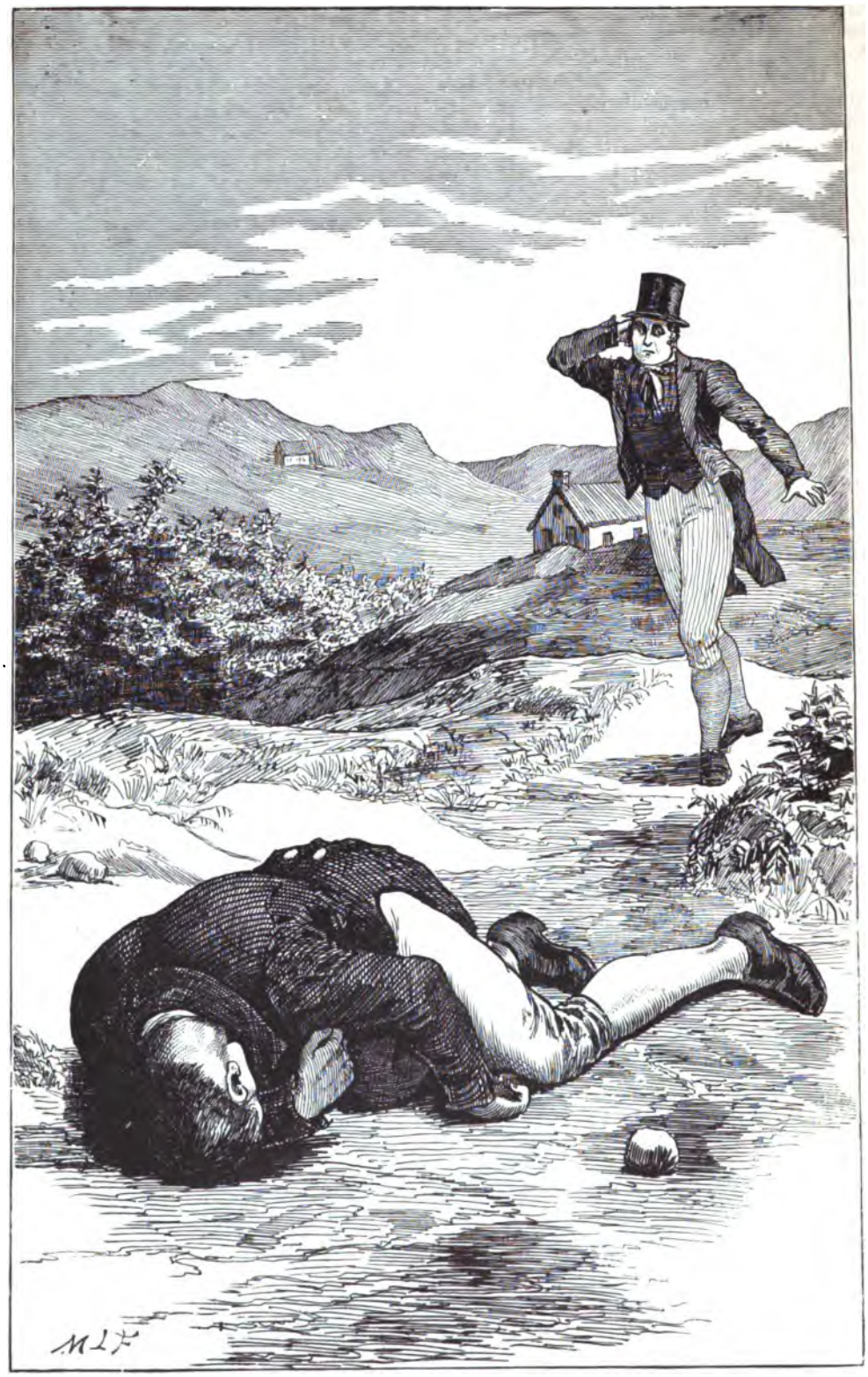
"So far only," replied Hugh, "that I'll stop it for good an' all. You'll get no clothes out of this press to-day. In ten years or so you may be thinkin' of it. There's Madge M'Cawley, take her, with all my heart; a girl that has fifty pounds, five cows, and threescore sheep: ay, an' a staid sober girl. To be sure she's no beauty, an' not fit for 'gintlemen' that must have purty faces, and empty pockets. I say again, Felix, I'll put an end to this match."

This was too much for Felix's patience. After several unsuccessful remonstrances, and even supplications very humbly expressed, a fierce struggle ensued between the brothers which was only terminated by the interference of the two servant-men, who with some difficulty forced the elder out of the house, and brought him across the fields towards his own home. Maura then gave up the key, and the youthful bridegroom was soon dressed and prepared to meet his "man," and a few friends whom he had invited, at the chapel. His mind, however, was disturbed, and his heart sank at this ill-omened commencement of his wedding day.

"Maura," said he, when about to leave the house, "I'm heavy at heart for what has happened. Will you say that you forgive me, dear, before I go? and tell Hugh that I forgive him everything, and that the last words I said before I went, wor—'that the blessin' of God may rest upon him and his,' and upon you too, Maura, dear."

These expressions are customary among Irish families when a marriage is about to take place; but upon this occasion they came spontaneously from a generous and feeling heart. Felix saw with sorrow that his brother and sister had not blessed him, and he resolved that his part of a duty so tender should not remain unperformed.

Maura, who suddenly averted her face



FELIX FELL FORWARD IN AN INSTANT, BUT BETRAYED, AFTER HIS FALL, NO SYMPTOMS OF MOTION. THE STILLNESS OF APPARENT DEATH WAS IN EVERY LIMB.—*Life Date; or, The Dark Day*, p. 75.

when he addressed her, made no reply; but after he had departed from the threshold, her eyes followed him, and the tears slowly forced their way down her cheeks.

"It's no use," said she, "it's no use, I love him, I love my kind brother in spite of every thing. May God bless you Felix! may God bless you, and all you love! God forgive me for opposin' the boy as I did; and God forgive Hugh! but he thinks it would be all for Felix's good to stop his marriage with Alley Bawn."

Felix, who heard neither his sister's blessing nor the expression of the affection she bore him, passed on with hasty steps through the fields. He had not gone far, however, when he saw his brother walking towards him; his arms folded, and his eyes almost hidden by his heavy brows; sullen ferocity was in his looks, and his voice, as he addressed him, was hollow with suppressed rage:—

"So," said he, "you will ruin youself! Go back home, Felix."

"For God's sake, Hugh, let me alone, let me pass."

"You will go?" said the other.

"I will, Hugh."

"Then may bad luck go with you, if you do. I order you to stay at home, I say."

"Mind your own business, Hugh, and I'll mind mine," was the only reply given him.

Felix walked on by making a small circuit out of the direct path, for he was anxious not only to proceed quickly, as his time was limited, but above all things, to avoid a collision with his brother.

The characteristic fury of the latter shot out in a burst that resembled momentary madness as much as rage. "Is that my answer?" he shouted, in the hoarse, quivering accents of passion; and with the rapid energy of the dark impulse which guided him, he snatched up a stone from a ditch, and flung it at his brother, whose back was towards him. Felix fell forward in an instant, but betrayed after his fall no symptoms of motion —the stillness of apparent death was in every limb. Hugh, after the blow had been given, stood rooted to the earth, and looked as if the demon which possessed him had fled the moment the fearful act had been committed. His now bloodless lips quivered, his frame became relaxed, and the wild tremor of horrible apprehension shook him from limb to limb. Immediately a fearful cry was heard far over the fields, and the words—"Oh! yeah! yeah, yeah, Felix, my brother, agra, can't you spake to me?" struck upon the heart of Maura and the servant-men, with a feeling of dismay, deep and deadly.

"O God!" she exclaimed, with clasped hands and upturned eyes, "O God! my boy, my boy—Felix, Felix, what has happened to you?"

Again the agonized cry of the brother was heard loud and frantic.

"Oh, yeah, yeah, Felix, are you dead? brother, agra, can't you speak to me?"

With rapid steps they rushed to the spot; but, ah! what a scene was there to blast their sight and sear the brain of his sister, and indeed of all who could look upon it. The young bridegroom smote down when his foot was on the very threshold of happiness, and by the hand of a brother?

Hugh, in the mean time, had turned up Felix from the prone posture in which he lay, with a hope—a frenzied, a desperate hope of ascertaining whether or not life was extinct. In this position the stricken boy was lying, his brother, like a maniac, standing over him, when Maura and the servants arrived. One glance, a shudder, then a long ghastly gaze at Hugh, and she sank down beside the insensible victim of his fury.

"What," said Hugh, wildly clenching his hands, "Mother of glory, have I killed both? Oh, Felix, Felix! you are happy, you are happy, agra, brother; but for me, oh, for me, *my* hour of mercy is past an' gone. I can never look to heaven more! How can I live," he muttered furiously to himself, "how can I live? and I darn't die. O God! O God! my brain's turnin'. I needn't pray to God to curse the hand that struck you dead, Felix dear, for I feel this minute that His curse is on me."

Felix was borne in, but no arm would Hugh suffer to encircle him but his own. Poor Maura recovered and although in a state of absolute distraction, yet she had presence of mind to remember that they ought to use every means in their power to restore the boy to life if it were possible. Water was got, with which his face was sprinkled; in a little time he breathed, opened his eyes, looked mournfully about him, and asked what had happened him. Never was pardon to the malefactor, nor the firm tread of land to the shipwrecked mariner, so welcome as the dawn of returning life in Felix was to his brother. The moment he saw the poor youth's eyes fixed upon him, and heard his voice, he threw himself on his knees at the bedside, clasped him in his arms, and with an impetuous tide of sensations, in which were blended joy, grief, burning affection, and remorse, he kissed his lips, strained him to his bosom, and wept with such agony, that poor Felix was compelled to console him.

"Oh! Felix, Felix," exclaimed Hugh,

"what was it I did to you? or how could the devil out of hell tempt me to-to-to-oh Felix agra, say you're not hurted—say only that you'll be as well as ever, an' I take God and every one present to witness, that from this minute till the day of my death, a harsh word 'll never crass my lips to you. Say you're not hurted, Felix dear! Don't you know, Felix, in spite of my dark-temper's putting me into a passion with you sometimes, that I always loved you?"

"Yes you did, Hugh," replied Felix, "an' I still knew you did. I didn't often contradict you, because I knew, too, that the passion would soon go off of you, and that you'd be kind to me again."

"Yeah, yeelish," said the other, while the scalding tears flowed profusely down his cheeks, and the deep sobs almost choked him. "Oh, yeah, yeelish! what *could* come over me! As judgment's before me, he was the best brother ever God created—you were, Felix darling—you were, you were!" He again pressed him to his heart, and kissed his lips with an overwhelming fulness of remorse and love.

"An' another thing, Felix dear—but first tell me are you gettin' betther?"

"I am," replied the youth, "my head is a little confused, but I have no pain."

Hugh raised his hands and streaming eyes to heaven.

"Thanks, thanks, oh thanks an' praise be to God for that news! thanks an' praise be to you, blessed Father, for what he has said this minute, for it takes the weight, the dead crushin' weight that lay on my heart, off it. And now, Felix jewel, here, alanna, lay over your head upon my breast, an' I'll hould you anything I whisper into your own ear what 'll make you as stout as ever—keep away all of yees—the nerra one o' ye 'll hear it but himself. Sure, Felix dear," he continued, in a lower voice, "sure I'm willin' that you should marry your own Alley Bawn. An' listen, sure, I'll give her a portion myself—I'm able to do it an' I will too."

Felix, on hearing her name, looked around and endeavored, as appeared by his manner, to collect himself. He put his hand to his head for a moment and his eyes were without meaning. Hugh observed it, and felt his grief instantly checked by a fearful surmise as to a possible consequence of the blow which he had not contemplated.

"Felix dear," said he in a voice low, hollow, and full of terror, "what ails you? Is the pain coming back?"

Felix spoke not for about a minute, during which time he had become quite collected. Then with an affectionate look towards his brother, he replied—

"God bless you, Hugh, for the words you have said to me! Poor Alley? Hugh, God bless you! Would Maura consent? Will *you* consent, agra, to it, Maura dear?"

Maura, who had been all this time weeping, now advanced, and, smiling through her tears, embraced him tenderly. "Yes, Felix, darling, an' I'm only heart-broken, that ever Hugh or myself refused to consent, or ever set ourselves against it."

The boy's eyes sparkled with a light more brilliant than had ever shone from them before: his whole face became animated, and the cloud of sorrow which had rested on his pale brow melted away before the effulgence of reviving hope. In a few minutes he arose and expressed his determination to proceed and keep his appointment. Hugh and Maura requested to accompany him, and the latter begged to be allowed the privilege to give the bride away.

"Maura," said Felix, "will you desire the servants to have a decent dinner prepared, and we'll eat it here. I intend, if you and Hugh will let me, to bring her home at once!"

"Och, God help the poor boy!" exclaimed Maura—"yes, darling, all that must be done."

When ready to depart, he again put his hand to his head—"It comes on here," said he, "for about a minute or so—this confusion—I think I'll tie a handkerchief about my head. It 'ill be an asy thing for me to make some excuse, or I can take it off at the chapel."

This was immediately acquiesced in; but at Hugh's suggestion a car was prepared, a horse yoked in a few minutes, and Felix, accompanied and supported by his brother and sister, set out for Mass. On arriving at the "green," he felt that his short journey had not been beneficial to him; on the contrary, he was worse, and very properly declined to go into the heated atmosphere of the chapel. A message by his sister soon brought the blushing, trembling, serious, yet happy-looking girl to his side. Her neat white dress, put on with that natural taste which is generally accompanied by as clear sense of moral propriety, and her plain cottage bonnet, bought for the occasion, showed that she came prepared, not beyond, but to the utmost reach of her humble means. And this she did more for Felix's sake than her own, for she resolved that her appearance should not, if possible, jar upon the feelings of one who, she knew, in marrying her, had sacrificed prospects of wealth and worldly happiness for her sake. At sight of her, Felix smiled, but it was observed that his face, which had a moment before been pale, was

instantly flushed, and his eye unusually bright. When he had kissed her, she replied to the friendly greetings of his brother and Maura with the most comely dignity, well suited to her situation and circumstances. Then turning to the elected husband of her heart, she said—

"Why thin, Felix, but it's little credit you do me this happy morning, coming with your night-cap on, as if you weren't well:" but as she saw the smile fade from his lips, and the color from his cheek, her heart sank, and "pallid as death's dedicated bride," with her soft blue eyes bent upon his changing color and bandaged head, she exclaimed, "God be merciful to us! Felix dear, you are ill—you are hurted! Felix, Felix darling, what ails you? What is wrong?"

"Don't be frightened, jewel," he replied, "Don't, darling—it won't signify—my foot slipped afther laving you last night on my way home, and my head came against a stone—it's only a little sore outside. It 'ill be very well as soon as the priest puts your heart and mine together—never to be parted—long—long an' airnestly have I wished an' prayed for this happy day. Isn't your mother here, jewel, an' my own little Ellen?"

Her eye had been fixed upon his countenance with all the love and anxiety of a young bride about to be united to the husband of her heart's first choice. She saw that despite of every effort to the contrary, there was in his mind a source of some secret sorrow. A single tear rolled down her cheek, which he kissed away, and as he did it, whispered her in a tone of affectionate confidence, that it was but a trifle and signified nothing. Maura took her hand, and assured her that no cause for apprehension existed; so did Hugh, but as he held her hand in his, he perceived that she got pale again, and trembled as if seized with some sudden fear.

When the ceremony was concluded, those who attended it of course returned to Felix's house to partake of the wedding-dinner. He, indeed, seemed to be gifted with new life; his eyes sparkled, and a deep carmine of his cheek was dazzling to look upon. Courtesy, and the usages prevalent on such occasions, compelled him to drink more than his state of health was just then capable of bearing; he did not, however, transgress the bounds of moderation. Still the noise of many tongues, the sounds of laughter, and the din of mirth, joined to the consciousness that his happiness was now complete, affected him with the feverish contagion of the moment. He talked hurriedly and loud, and seemed to feel as if the accomplishment of his cherished hopes was too much for his heart to bear.

In the midst of all this jollity, a change which none observed came over him. His laugh became less frequent than his shudder or his sigh, and taking Alley aside, he begged she would walk with him to the beach.

"The say-breeze," said he, "and a sate upon the rocks—upon our thyme-bank, where we've often sat happily, Alley dear, will bring me to myself soon. I am tired, asthore machree, of all this noise and confusion. Come away, darling, we'll be happier with one another than with all these people about us."

His young bride accompanied him, and as they went, her happy heart beating under that arm to whose support she had now *a right*, her love the while calm and secure in its own deep purity, she saw before them, in bright perspective, many, many years of domestic affection and peace.

There they sat in the mellow sunset, until the soft twilight had 'gradually melted away the lengthened shadows of the rocks about them. Their hands were locked in each other, their hearts burned within them, and a tenderness which can be felt only by souls equally pure and innocent touched their delighted converse into something that might be deemed beautiful and holy.

Artless, humble, and happy pair! Sit on and enjoy the only brief glimpse of this earth's heaven which you will ever get. It is the last time that heart will beat responsive to heart, and soul tremble to and mingle with soul between you.

Long before the hour of their return, Felix had felt much worse than during any preceding part of the day. The vivid and affectionate hopes of future happiness expressed by Alley added to his concern, and increased his tenderness towards her, especially when he contrasted his own physical sensations with the unsuspicious character of her opinion concerning his illness and the cause that produced it. 'Tis true he disguised all this as long as he could; but at length, notwithstanding his firmness, he was forced to acknowledge that pain overcame him. With the burning chill of fever bubbling through his blood—shivering yet scorching—he complained of the shooting pain in his head, and a strange confusion of mind, which the poor girl, from some of his incoherent expressions, had attributed to his excess of affection. With words of comfort she soothed him; *her* arm now returned the support she had received from his; she led him home, languid and half-delirious, whilst she herself felt stunned as well by the violence as by the unaccountable nature of his illness. On reaching home

they found that the noise of social enjoyment had risen to the outrage of convivial extravagance; but the moment he staggered in, supported only by the faithful arm of his wife, a solemn and apprehensive spirit suddenly hushed their intemperance, and awed them into a conviction that such an illness upon the marriage day must be as serious as it was uncommon. Felix was put to bed in pain and danger; but Alley smoothed his pillow, bound his head, and sat patient, and devoted, and wife-like, by his side. During all that woeful night of sorrow she watched the feverish start, the wild glare of the half-opened eye, the momentary conscious glance, and the miserable gathering together of the convulsed limbs, hoping that each pang would diminish in agony and that the morning might bring ease and comfort.

"Poor girl, put on thy stifling widow's weeds,
And 'scape at once from Hope's accursed bands!"

We feel utterly incapable of describing, during the progress of this heavy night, the scorching and fiery anguish of his brother Hugh, or the distracted and wailing sorrow of poor Maura. The unexpected and delightful revulsion of feeling produced upon both, especially on the former, by his temporary recovery, now utterly incapacitated them from bearing his relapse with anything like fortitude. The frantic remorse of the guilty man, and the stupid but pungent grief of his sister, appeared but as the symptoms of weak minds and strong passions, when contrasted with the deep but patient affliction of his innocent and uncomplaining wife. She wasted no words in sorrow; for during this hopeless night, self, happiness, affection, hope, were all forgotten in the absorbing efforts at his recovery. Never, indeed, did the miseries and calamities of life draw from the fruitful source of a wife's attached and faithful heart, a nobler specimen of that pure and disinterested devotion which characterizes woman, than was exhibited by the stricken-hearted Alley Bawn.

There was something in this peculiar case, as, indeed there are in all family occurrences of a similar nature, which induced them to try upon the suffering boy the full extent of their humble skill, rather than call in a strange physician to witness the disastrous, perhaps fatal, effects of domestic violence. Had the cause of Felix's illness been unknown to Hugh or Maura, they would have procured medical advice in the early part of the night. Let us, however, not press too severely on the repentant brother. Shame, and remorse, and penitence, ought to plead strongly for "the hope deferred that made his heart sick." Hugh's passions arose to violence, but not to murder, a distinction which both law and morality too frequently forget to make.

When Hugh saw, however, that nothing except medical skill could save him, he forgot his crime and its consequences. Stung to madness by his love of Felix, and his fears for his recovery, he mounted a horse, and had almost broken down the animal by over-exertion, ere he reached the village of B———, where the doctor he sought lived. After an impetuous and violent knocking the door was opened, and a man pale and horror-struck entered, whom the doctor was inclined to receive rather as the patient than the messenger. Yes! haggard, wild, yet weak and trembling, he staggered into the room, and, sinking on a seat, in a voice husky and hoarse said—

"Docthor! oh, docthor, you won't refuse to come! It's thrue he was my brother—but I had not—I had not—oh—no—no—I had it not in my heart to murdher him! My brother is dyin'. Oh, come, docthor! come to my brother, he's dyin', and 'twas I that struck the blow."

With a vehemence of grief that was pitiable, and an exhibition of the wildest gestures which characterize despair, he then uttered a cry that rang through the house.

"Oh, Felix agra, my brother, I'm your murdherer! My sister and I are both wealthy—he's dyin' docthor—come, come. Oh, agra Felix—agra Felix! To see you well—to see you well—the wealth of the world, if I had it, would go. My life—my life—docthor! Oh, that would be but little—but it, too, would go—I'd give it—all we have, my sister and I, to our blanket—to the shoes on our feet, and the coat and gown on our backs—all—all—you'll get—if you can save our brother, that I struck down and murdhered!"

The doctor, a man of great skill and humanity, immediately ordered his horse, and mounting him, accompanied Hugh to the sick bed of his brother. On arriving there, they found him worse; and never before, nor during his whole professional experience, had the doctor witnessed such a scene. Hugh took his place behind Felix, who, by the doctor's direction, was placed in a half-sitting, half-recumbent posture in the bed; his arms were placed distractedly about him, his breast was his pillow, and his cheek, wildly and with voracious affection, laid to his. He was restrained from crying aloud, but his groans were enough to wrench the heart from which they proceeded to pieces. Sympathy, in fact, was transferred from the sick boy to his brother; and perhaps more tears

were shed, by the lookers-on, from pity towards Hugh than Felix.

But where was she, the bride and wife of a changeful day—of a day, in which the extremities of happiness and misery met? Oh, where but where she should and ought to be, at his bed-side, hoping against hope, soothing his wild ravings by her soft sweet voice; and when, in his *delirium*, the happy scene of the past day seemed re-acted, then she knelt, ever ready to lead him, by her words and caresses, into a forgetfulness of his present pain. In his desperate struggles he fancied they were tearing her from him; and when the strength of several men could scarce restrain him, then came the mildness of her power. With her gentle hands and her fond, kind words she laid him in peace once more, and, kneeling by his side, cooled his burning temples with her pale fingers, and wetted his parched lips with the draught prescribed by the physician. When the crisis, however, approached, she saw by the keen glance of observant affection, that the doctor's manner betrayed his hopelessness of her husband's recovery. Then did her strength give way, and one violent fit of hysteric sobbing almost broke down her reason and physical powers. Unavailing was all their tenderness, and fruitless every attempt at consolation. Even her own beloved mother failed. "Alley, asthore agruc machree," said she, "don't give way to this, for it's sinful; it's wrong to cry so bitterly for the livin'. You know that while there's life there's hope. God is merciful, and may think fit to pity you, anien machree, and to spare him for the sake of our prayers, that your heart mayn't be broken. Here's the priest, too, an' sure it's a comfort, if the Lord *does* take him from us, that he's not goin' widout the holy sacraments of the Church, to clear away any stain of sin that may be on him."

Felix, tranquilized by the satisfaction that always results from the consciousness of having received the rites of the Church, yet moved by the deep sobbings of his miserable brother, took his hand, and thus addressed him—

"Hugh dear!"

"Oh, Felix, Felix, Felix darling, if you spake kind to me my brain will turn, and my heart will burst to pieces! Harsh, harsh, avourneen, speak harshly, cruelly, blackly—oh, say you won't forgive me—but no, *that* I couldn't bear—forgive me in your heart, and before God, but don't spake wid affection to me, for then I'll not be able to bear it."

"Hugh," said Felix, from whose eyes the keenness of his brother's repentance wrung tears, despite his burning agony; "Hugh dear"—and he looked pitifully in the convulsed face of the unhappy man—"Hugh dear, it was only an accident, for if you had—thought—that it would turn out—as it has done—— But no matter now—you have my forgiveness—and you deserve it; for Hugh dear, it was as much and more my own thoughtlessness and self-will that caused it. Hugh dear, comfort and support Alley here, and Maura, too, Hugh; be kind to them both for poor Felix's sake." He sank back, exhausted, holding his brother's hand in his left, and his mute heart-broken bride's in his right. A calm, or rather torpor, followed, which lasted until his awakening spirit, in returning consciousness of life and love, made a last effort to dissolve in a farewell embrace upon the pure bosom of his virgin wife.

"Alley," said he, "are you not my wife, and amn't I your husband? Whose hand should be upon me—in what arms but yours should I die? Alley, think of your own Felix—oh, don't let me pass altogether out of your memory; an' if you'd wear a lock of my hair (many a time you used to curl it over on my cheek, for you used to say it was the same shade as your own, and you used to compare them together), wear it for my sake, next your heart, and if ever you think of doin' a wrong thing, look at it, and you'll remember that Felix, who's now in the dust, always desired you to pray for the Almighty's grace, an' trust to Him for strength against evil. But where are you, asthore? My eyes want a last look of you; I feel you—ay, I feel you in my breakin' heart, and sweet your presence in it, avourneen machree; but how is it that I cannot see you? Oh, my wife, my young wife, my spotless wife, be with me—near me!" He clasped her to his heart, as if while he held her there he thought it could not cease to beat; but in a moment, after one slight shudder, one closing pang, his grasp relaxed—his head fell upon her bosom—and he, Felix, who that morning stood up in the bloom of youth and manly beauty, with the cup of happiness touching his lips, was now a clod of the valley. Half unconscious—almost unbelieving that all could be over, she gently laid him down. On looking into his face, her pale lips quivered; and as her mute wild gaze became fixed upon the body, slowly the desolating truth forced itself upon her heart. She then sank upon her knees, and prayed to God that, if it were His will, and lawful for her in her misery to utter such a prayer, He would not part her in death from him who had been to her far dearer than all that life now contained—without whom the world was now empty to her for ever.

Quietly and calmly she then arose, and but

for the settled wretchedness of her look, the stillness of her spirit might have been mistaken for apathy. Without resistance, without a tear, in the dry agony of burning grief she gently gave herself up to the guidance of those who wept, while they attempted to soothe her. In reply to their attempts at consolation she only uttered one brief sentence in Irish. "Oh," said she, "God is good—still, still, this was a *dark day* to Felix and to me!"

At the inquest which followed, there was no proof to criminate the wretched brother; nor, to speak truly, were the jury anxious to find any. The man's shrieking misery was more wild and frightful than death itself. From "the Dark Day" until this on which I write, he has never been able to raise his heart or his countenance. Home he never leaves, except when the pressure of business compels him; and when he does, in every instance he takes the most unfrequented paths and the loneliest by-roads, in order to avoid the face and eye of man. Better, indeed, to encounter flood or fire, than to suffer what he has borne, when the malicious or coarse-minded have reproached him, in what we trust, is his repentance, with his great affliction.

Alley, contrary to the earnest solicitations of Hugh and Maura, went back to reside with her mother. Four years have now passed, and the virgin widow is constant to her grief. With a bunch of yarn on her arm, she may be occasionally seen in the next market-town; the chastened sorrow of her look agreeing well with her mournful weeds. In vain is she pressed to mingle in the rustic amusements of her former companions; she cannot do it, even to please her mother; the poor girl's heart is sorrow-struck for ever. She will never smile again. As it is, however, the steady subdued melancholy of her manner increases the respect, without lessening the love, of all who know her. Who, indeed, could see her, and hear her sad history without loving her purity, and her devoted affection to the memory of him that was only the husband of a day, without pitying the stricken girl who suffered so much, and wishing that time, which weans us from our greatest sorrows, may, by its influence, mellow her afflictions, until the bitterness of their spirit passes out of her soul.

Reader, if you want a moral, look upon the wasted brow of Hugh O'Donnell, and learn to restrain your passions and temper within its proper limits.

THE DEAD BOXER.

CHAPTER I.

ONE evening in the beginning of the eighteenth century—as nearly as we can conjecture, the year might be that of 1720—some time about the end of April, a young man named *Lamh Laudher* O'Rorke, or Strong-handed O'Rorke, was proceeding from his father's house, with a stout oaken cudgel in his hand, towards an orchard that stood at the skirt of a country town, in a part of the kingdom which, for the present, shall be nameless. Though known by the epithet of *Lamh Laudher*, his christian name was John; but in those time Irish families of the same name were distinguished from each other by some indicative of their natural position, physical power, complexion, or figure. One, for instance, was called *Parra Ghastha*, or swift Paddy, from his fleetness of foot; another, *Shaun Buie*, or yellow Jack, from his bilious look; a third, *Micaul More*, or big Michael, from his uncommon size; and a fourth, *Sheemus Ruah*, or red James, from the color of his hair. These epithets, to be sure, still occur in Ireland, but far less frequently now than in the times of which we write, when Irish was almost the vernacular language of the country. It was for a reason similar to those just alleged, that John O'Rorke was known as *Lamh Laudher* O'Rorke; he, as well as his forefathers for two or three generations, having been remarkable for prodigious bodily strength and courage. The evening was far advanced as O'Rorke bent his steps to the orchard. The pale, but cloudless sun hung over the western hills, and shed upon the quiet gray fields that kind of tranquil radiance which, in the opening of summer, causes many a silent impulse of delight to steal into the heart. Lamh Laudher felt this; his step was slow, like that of a man who, without being capable of tracing those sources of enjoyment which the spirit absorbs from the beauties of external nature, has yet enough of uneducated taste and feeling within him, to partake of the varied feast which she presents.

As he sauntered thus leisurely along he was met by a woman rather advanced in years, but still unusually stout and muscular, considering her age. She was habited in a red woollen petticoat that reached but a short distance below the knee, leaving visible two stout legs, from which dangled a pair of red garters that bound up her coarse blue hose. Her gown of blue worsted was pinned up, for it did not meet around her person, though it sat closely about her neck. Her grizzly red hair, turned up in front, was bound by a dowd cap without any border, a circumstance which, in addition to a red kerchief, tied over it, and streaming about nine inches down the back, gave to her *tout ensemble* a wild and striking expression. A short oaken staff, hooked under the hand, completed the description of her costume. Even on a first glance there appeared to be something repulsive in her features, which had evidently been much exposed to sun and storm. By a closer inspection one might detect upon their hard angular outline, a character of cruelty and intrepidity. Though her large cheek-bones stood widely asunder, yet her gray piercing eyes were very near each other; her nose was short and sadly disfigured by a scar that ran tranversely across it, and her chin, though pointed, was also deficient in length. Altogether, her whole person had something peculiar and marked about it—so much so, indeed, that it was impossible to meet her without feeling she was a female of no ordinary character and habits.

Lamh Laudher had been, as we have said, advancing slowly along the craggy road which led towards the town, when she issued from an adjoining cabin and approached him. The moment he noticed her he stood still, as if to let her pass and uttered one single exclamation of chagrin and anger.

"*Ma shaughth milia mollach ort, a calliagh!* My seven thousand curses on you for an old hag," said he, and having thus given vent to his indignation at her appearance, he began to retrace his steps as if unwilling to meet her.

"The son of your father needn't lay the curse upon us so bitterly all out, Lamh Laudher!" she exclaimed, pacing at the same time with vigorous steps until she overtook him.

The young man looked at her maimed features, and as if struck by some sudden recollection, appeared to feel regret for the hasty malediction he had uttered against her. "Nell M'Collum," said he, "the word was rash; and the curse did not come from my heart. But, Nell, who is there that doesn't curse you when they meet you? Isn't it well known that to meet you is another name for falling in wid bad luck? For my part I'd go fifty miles about rather than cross you, if I was bent on any business that my heart 'ud be in, or that I cared any thing about."

"And who brought the bad luck upon me first?" asked the woman. "Wasn't it the husband of the mother that bore you? Wasn't it *his* hand that disfigured me as you see, when I was widin a week of bein' dacently married? Your father, Lamh Laudher, was the man that blasted my name, and made it bitther upon tongue of them that mintions it."

"And that was because he wouldn't see one wid the blood of Lamh Laudher in his veins married to a woman that he had reason to think—I don't like to *say* it, Nelly—but you know it *is* said that there was darkness, and guilt, too, about the disappearin' of your child. You never cleared that up, but swore revenge night and day against my father, for only preventin' you from bein' the ruination of his cousin. Many a time, too, since that, has he asked you in my own hearin' what became of the boy."

The old woman stopped like one who had unexpectedly trod with bare foot upon something sharp enough to pierce the flesh to the bone, and even to grate against it. There was a strong, nay, a fearful force of anguish visible in what she felt. Her brows were wildly depressed from their natural position, her face became pale, her eyes glared upon O'Rorke as if he had planted a poisoned arrow in her breast, she seized him by the arm with a hard pinching grip, and looked for two or three minutes in his face, with an appearance of distraction. O'Rorke, who never feared man, shrunk from her touch, and shuddered under the influence of what had been, scarcely without an exception, called the "bad look." The crone held him tight, however, and there they stood, with their eyes fixed upon each other. From the gaze of intense anguish, the countenance of Nell M'Collum began to change gradually to one of unmingled exultation; her brows were raised to their proper curves, her color returned, the eye corruscated with a rapid and quivering sense of delight, the muscles of the mouth played for a little, as if she strove to suppress a laugh. At length O'Rorke heard a low gurgling sound proceed from her chest; it increased; she pressed his arm more tightly, and in a loud burst of ferocious mirth, which she immediately subdued into a condensed shriek that breathed the very luxury of revenge, she said—

"*Lamh Laudher Oge*, listen—ax the father of you, when you see him, what has become *of his own child*—of the first that ever God sent him; an' listen again—when *he* tells *me* what has become of *mine*, *I'll* tell *him* what has become of *his*. Now go to Ellen—but before you go, let me *cuggher* in your ear that I'll blast you both. I'll make the *Lamh Laudhers*, *Lamh Lhugs*. I'll make the strong arm the weak arm afore I've done wid 'em."

She struck the point of her stick against the pavement, until the iron ferrule with which it was bound dashed the fire from the stones, after which she passed on, muttering threats and imprecations as she left him.

O'Rorke stood and looked after her with sensations of fear and astonishment. The age was superstitious, and encouraged a belief in the influence of powers distinct from human agency. Every part of Ireland was filled at this time with characters, both male and female, precisely similar to old Nell M'Collum. The darkness in which this woman walked, according to the opinions of a people but slightly advanced in knowledge and civilization, has been but feebly described to the reader. To meet her was considered an omen of the most unhappy kind; a circumstance which occasioned the imprecation of Lamh Laudher. She was reported to have maintained an intercourse with the fairies, to be capable of communicating the blight of an evil eye, and to have carried on a traffic which is said to have been rather prevalent in Ireland at the time we speak of—namely, that of kidnapping. The speculations with reference to her object in perpetrating the crimes were strongly calculated to exhibit the degraded state of the people at that period. Some said that she disposed of the children to a certain class of persons in the metropolis, who subsequently sent them to the colonies, when grown, at an enormous profit. Others maintained that she never carried them to Dublin at all, but insisted that, having been herself connected with the fairies, she possessed the power of erasing, by some secret charm, the influence of baptismal protection, and that she consequently acted as agent for the "gentry" to whom she transferred them. Even to this day it is the opinion in Ireland, that the "good people" themselves cannot take away a child, except through the instrumentality of some *mortal* residing with them, who has been baptized; and it is also believed that no baptism can secure children from them, except that in

which the priest has been *desired* to baptize them with an especial view to their protection against fairy power.

Such was the character which this woman bore; whether unjustly or not, matters little. For the present it is sufficient to say, that after having passed on, leaving Lamh Laudher to proceed in the direction he had originally intended, she bent her steps towards the head inn of the town. Her presence here produced some cautious and timid mirth of which they took care she should not be cognizant. The servants greeted her with an outward show of cordiality, which the unhappy creature easily distinguished from the warm kindness evinced to vagrants whose history had not been connected with evil suspicion and mystery. She accordingly tempered her manner and deportment towards them with consummate skill. Her replies to their inquiries for news were given with *an appearance* of good humor; but beneath the familiarity of her dialogue there lay an ambiguous meaning and a cutting sarcasm, both of which were tinged with a prophetic spirit, capable, from its equivocal drift, of being applied to each individual whom she addressed. Owing to her unsettled life, and her habit of passing from place to place, she was well acquainted with local history. There lived scarcely a family within a very wide circle about her, of whom she did not know every thing that could possibly be known; a fact of which she judiciously availed herself by allusions in general conversations that were understood only by those whom they concerned. These mysterious hints, oracularly thrown out, gained her the reputation of knowing more than mere human agency could acquire, and of course she was openly conciliated and secretly hated.

Her conversation with the menials of the inn was very short and decisive.

"Sheemus," said she to the person who acted in the capacity of waiter, "where's Meehaul Neil?"

"Troth, Nell, dacent woman," replied the other, "myself can't exactly say that. I'll be bound he's on the *Esker*, looking afther the sheep, poor crathurs, durin' Andy Connor's illness in the small-pock. Poor Andy's very ill, Nell, an' if God hasn't sed it, not expected; glory be to his name!"

"Is Andy ill?" inquired Nell; "and how long?"

"Bedad, going on ten days."

"Well," said the woman, "I knew *nothin'* about that; but I want to see Meehaul Neil, and I know he's in the house."

"Faix he's not, Nelly, an' you know I wouldn't tell *you* a lie about it."

"Did you get the linen that was stolen from your masther?" inquired Nell significantly, turning at the same time a piercing glance on the waiter; "an' tell me," she added, "how is Sally Lavery, and where is she?"

"It wasn't got," he replied, in a kind of stammer; "an' as to Sally, the nerra one o' me knows any thing about her, since she left this."

"Sheemus," replied Nell, "you know that Meehaul Neil *is* in the house; but I'll give you two choices, either to bring me to the speech of him, or else I'll give your masther the name of the thief that stole his linen; ay! the name of the thief that resaved it. I name nobody at present; an' for that matther, I know nothin'. Can't all the world tell you that Nell M'Cullum knows nothin'!".

"*Ghe dhevin*, Nelly," said the waiter, "maybe Meehaul *is* in the house unknownst to me. I'll try, any how, an' if he's to the fore, it won't be my fault or he'll see you."

Nell, while the waiter went to inform Meehaul, took two ribbons out of her pocket, one white and the other black, both of which she folded into what would appear to a bystander to be a simple kind of knot. When the innkeeper's son and the waiter returned to the hall, the former asked her what the nature of her business with him might be. To this she made no reply, except by uttering the word *husht!* and pulling the ends, first of the white ribbon, and afterwards of the black. The knot of the first slipped easily from the complication, but that of the black one, after gliding along from its respective ends, became hard and tight in the middle.

"*Tha sha marrho!* life passes and death stays," she exclaimed. "Andy Connor's dead, Meehaul Neil; an' you may tell your father that he must get some one else to look afther his sheep. Ay! he's dead!—But that's past. Meehaul, folly me; it's you I want, an' there's no time to be lost."

She passed out as she spoke, leaving the waiter in a state of wonder at the extent of her knowledge, and of the awful means by which, in his opinion, she must have acquired it.

Meehaul, without uttering a syllable, immediately walked after her. The pace at which she went was rapid and energetic, betokening a degree of agitation and interest on her part, for which he could not account. As she had no object in bringing him far from the house, she availed herself of the first retired spot that presented itself, in order to disclose the purport of her visit. "Meehaul Neil," said she, "we're now upon the Common, where no ear can hear what passes between us. I ax have you spirit to keep your sister Ellen from shame and sor-

row?" The young man started, and became strongly excited at such a serious prelude to what she was about to utter.

"*Milla diououl!* woman, why do you talk about shame or disgrace comin' upon any sister of mine? What villain dare injure her that regards his life? My sisther! Ellen Neil! No, no! the man that 'ud only think of *that*, I'd give this right hand a dip to the wrist in the best blood of his heart."

"Ay, ay! it's fine spakin': but you don't know the hand you talk of. It's one that you had better avoid than meet. It's the *strong hand*, an' the dangerous one when vexed. You know *Lamh Laudher Oge?*"

Meehaul started again, and the crone could perceive by his manner that the nature of the communication she was about to make had been already known to him, though not, she was confident, in so dark and diabolical a shape as that in which she determined to put it.

"Lamh Laudher Oge!" he exclaimed; "surely you don't mane to say that he has any bad design upon Ellen! It's not long since I gave him a caution to drop her, an' to look out for a girl fittin' for his station. Ellen herself knows what he'll get, if we ever catch him spakin' to her again. The day will never come that *his* faction and *ours* can be friends."

"You did do that, Meehaul," replied Nell, "an' I knew it; but what 'ud you think if he was so cut to the heart by your turnin' round upon his poverty, that he swore an oath to them that I could name, bindin' himself to bring your sister to a state of shame, in order to punish you for your words? That 'ud be great glory over a faction that they hate."

"Tut, woman, he daren't swear such an oath; or, if he swore it fifty times over on his bare knees, he'd ate the stones off o' the pavement afore he'd dare to act upon it. In the first place, I'd prepare him for his coffin, if he did; an' in the next, do you think so manely of Ellen, as to believe that she would bring disgrace an' sorrow upon herself and her family? No, no, Nell; the old *dioul's* in you, or you're beside yourself, to think of such a story. *I've* warned her against him, and so did we all; an' I'm sartin' this minute, that she'd not go a single foot to change words with him, unknownst to her friends."

The old woman's face changed from the expression of anxiety and importance that it bore, to one of coarse glee, under which, to those who had penetration sufficient to detect it, lurked a spirit of hardened and reckless ferocity.

"Well, well," she replied, "sure I'm proud to hear what you tell me. How is poor Nanse M'Collum doin' wid yez? for I hadn't time to see her a while agone. I hope *she'll* never be ashamed or afraid of her aunt, any how. I may say, I'm all that's left to the good of her name, poor *girshah.*"

"What 'ud ail her?" replied Meehaul; "as long as she's honest an' behaves herself, there's no fear of her. Had you nothing else to say to me, Nell?"

The same tumultuous expression of glee and malignity again lit up the features of the old woman, as she looked at him, and replied, with something like contemptuous hesitation, "Why, I don't know that. If you had more sharpness or sinse I might say—Meehaul Neil," she added, elevating her voice, "what do you think I *could* say, this sacred minnit! Your sister! Why she's a good girl!—true enough that: but how long she *may* be so's another affair. Afeard! Be the ground we stand on, man dear, if you an' all belongin' to you, had eyes in your heads for every day in the year, you couldn't keep her from young Lamh Laudher. Did you hear anything?"

"I'd not believe a word of it," said Meehaul calmly, and he turned to depart.

"I tell you it's as true as the sun to the dial," replied Nell; "and I tell you more, he's wid her this minnit behind your father's orchard! Ay! an' if you wish you may see them together wid your own eyes, an' sure if you don't b'lieve *me*, you'll b'lieve *them*. But, Meehaul, take care of him; for he has his fire-arms; if you meet him don't go empty-handed, and I'd advise you to have the *first shot.*"

"Behind the orchard," said Meehaul, astonished; "where there?"

"Ay, behind the orchard, where they often war afore. Where there? Why, if you want to know that, sittin' on one of the ledges in the Grassy Quarry. That's their sate whenever they meet; an' a snug one it is for them that don't like their neighbors' eyes to be upon them. Go now an' satisfy yourself, but watch them at a distance, an', as you expect to save your sister, don't breathe the name of Nell M'Collum to a livin' mortal."

Meehaul Neil's cheek flushed with deep resentment on hearing this disagreeable intelligence. For upwards of a century before there had subsisted a deadly feud between the Neils and Lamh Laudhers, without either party being able exactly to discover the original fact from which their enmity proceeded. This, however, in Ireland, makes little difference. It is quite sufficient to know that they meet and fight upon every possible opportunity, as hostile factions ought to do, without troubling themselves about the idle nonsense of inquiring why they hate and maltreat each other. For this

reason alone, Meehaul Neil was bitterly opposed to the most distant notion of a marriage between his sister and young Lamh Laudher. There were other motives also which weighed, with nearly equal force, in the consideration of this subject. His sister Ellen was by far the most beautiful girl of her station in the whole country, and many offers, highly advantageous, and far above what she otherwise could have expected, had been made to her. On the other hand, Lamh Laudher Oge was poor, and by no means qualified in point of worldly circumstances to propose for her, even were hereditary enmity out of the question. All things considered, the brother and friends of Ellen would rather have seen her laid in her grave, than allied to a comparatively poor young man, and their bitterest enemy.

Meehaul had but little doubt as to the truth of what Nell M'Collum told him. There was a saucy and malignant confidence in her manner, which, although it impressed him with a sense of her earnestness, left, nevertheless, an indefinite feeling of dislike against her on his mind. He knew that her motive for disclosure was not one of kindness or regard for him or for his family. Nell M'Collum had often declared that "the wide earth did not carry a bein' she liked or loved, but *one*—not even excepting herself, that she hated most of all." This however was not necessary to prove that she acted rather from the gratification of some secret malice, than from the principle of benevolence. The venomous leer of her eye, therefore, and an accurate knowledge of her character, induced him to connect some apprehension of approaching evil with the unpleasant information she had just given him.

"Well," said Meehaul, "if what you say is true, I'll make it a black business to Lamh Laudher. I'll go directly and keep my eye on them; an' *I'll* have *my* fire-arms, Nell; an' by the life that's in me, he'll taste them if he provokes me; an Ellen knows *that*." Having thus spoken he left her.

The old woman stood and looked after him with a fiendish complacency.

"A black business, will you?" she exclaimed, repeating his words in a soliloquy; —"do so—an' may all that's black assist you in it! Dher Chiernah, I'll do it or lose a fall—I'll make the Lamh Laudhers the Lamh Lhugs afore I've done wid 'em. I've put a thorn in their side this many a year, that'll never come out; I'll now put one in their *marrow*, an' let them see how they'll bear *that*. I've left *one* empty chair at their hearth, an' it 'll go hard wid me but I'll lave another.

Having thus expressed her hatred against a family to whom she attributed the calamities that had separated her from society, and marked her as a being to be avoided and detested, she also departed from the Common, striking her stick with peculiar bitterness into the ground as she went along.

CHAPTER II.

In the mean time young Lamh Laudher felt little suspicion that the stolen interview between him and Ellen Neil was known. The incident, however, which occurred to him on his way to keep the assignation, produced in his mind a vague apprehension which he could not shake off. To meet a red-haired woman, when going on any business of importance, was considered at all times a bad omen, as it is in the country parts of Ireland unto this day; but to meet a female familiar with forbidden powers, as Nell M'Collum was supposed to be, never failed to produce fear and misgiving in those who met her. Mere physical courage was no bar against the influence of such superstitions; many a man was a slave to them who never knew fear of a human or tangible enemy. They constituted an important part of the popular belief! for the history of ghosts and fairies, and omens, was, in general, the only kind of lore in which the people were educated; thanks to the sapient traditions of their forefathers.

When Nell passed away from Lamh Laudher, who would fain have flattered himself that by turning back on the way, until she passed him, he had avoided meeting her, he once more sought the place of appointment, at the same slow pace as before. On arriving behind the orchard, he found, as the progress of the evening told him, that he had anticipated the hour at which it had been agreed to meet. He accordingly descended the Grassy Quarry, and sat on a mossy ledge of rock, over which the brow of a little precipice jutted in such a manner as to render those who sat beneath, visible only from a particular point. Here he had scarcely seated himself when the trend of a foot was heard, and in a few minutes Nanse M'Collum stood beside him.

"Why, thin, bad cess to you, Lamh Laudher," she exclaimed, "but it's a purty chase I had afther you."

"Afther me, Nanse? and what's the commission, *cush gastha* (lightfoot)?"

"The sorra any thing, at all, at all, only to see if you war here. Miss Ellen sent me to tell you that she's afeard she can't come this evenin', unknownst to them."

"An' am I not to wait, Nanse?"

"Why, she says she *will* come, for all that, if *she can;* but she bid me take your stick from you, for a rason she has, that she'll tell yourself when she sees you."

"Take my stick! Why Nanse, *ma colleen baun*, what can *she* want with *my* stick? Is the darlin' girl goin' to bate any body?"

"Bad cess to the know *I* know, Lamh Laudher, barrin' it be to lay on yourself for stalin' her heart from her. Why thin, the month's mether o' honey to you, soon an' sudden, how did you come round her at all?"

"No matter about that, Nanse; but the family's bitther against me?—eh?"

"Oh, thin, in trogs, it's ill their common to hate you as they do; but thin, you see, this faction-work will keep yees asundher for ever. Now gi' me your stick, an' wait, any way, till you see whether she comes or not."

"Is it by Ellen's ordhers you take it, Nanse?"

"To be sure—who else's? but the divil a one o' me knows what she means by it, any how—only that *I* daren't go back widout it."

"Take it, Nanse; she knows I wouldn't refuse her my heart's blood, let alone a bit of a kippeen."

"A bit of a kippeen! Faix, this is a quare kippeen! Why, it would fell a bullock."

"When you see her, Nanse, tell her to make haste, an' for God's sake not to disappoint me. I can't rest well the day I don't meet her."

"Maybe other people's as bad, for that matter; so good night, an' the mether o' honey to you, soon an' sudden! Faix, if any body stand in my way now, they'll feel the weight of this, any how."

After uttering the last words, she brandished the cudgel and disappeared.

Lamh Laudher felt considerably puzzled to know what object Ellen could have had in sending the servant maid for his staff. Of one thing, however, he was certain, that her motive must have had regard to his own safety; but how, or in what manner, he could not conjecture. It is certainly true some misgivings shot lightly across his imagination, on reflecting that he had parted with the very weapon which he usually brought with him to repel the violence of Ellen's friends, should he be detected in an interview with her. He remembered, too, that he had met unlucky Nell M'Collum, and that the person who deprived him of his principal means of defence was her niece. He had little time, however, to think upon the subject, for in a few minutes after Nanse's departure, he recognized the light quick step of her whom he expected.

The figure of Ellen Neil was tall, and her motions full of untaught elegance and natural grace. Her countenance was a fine oval; her features, though not strictly symmetrical, were replete with animation, and her eyes sparkled with a brilliancy indicative of a warm heart and a quick apprehension. Flaxen hair, long and luxuriant, decided, even at a distant glance, the loveliness of her skin, than which the unsunned snow could not be whiter. If you add to this a delightful temper, buoyant spirits, and extreme candor, her character, in its strongest points, is before you.

On reaching the bottom of the Grassy Quarry, as it was called, she peered under the little beetling cliff that overhung the well-known ledge on which Lamh Laudher sat.

"I declare, John," said she, on seeing him, "I thought at first you weren't here."

"Did you ever know me to be late!" said John, taking her by the hand, and placing her beside him; "and what would you a' done, Ellen, if I hadn't been here?"

"Why, run home as if the life was lavin' me, for fear of seein' something."

"*You* needn't be afeard, Ellen, dear; nothing could harm you, at all events. However, puttin' that aside, have you any betther tidin's than you had when we met last?"

"I wish to heaven I had, John! but indeed I have far worse; ay, a thousand times worse. They have all joined against me, an' I'm not to see or speak to you at all."

"That's hard," replied Lamh Laudher, drawing his breath tightly; "but I know where it comes from. I think your father might be softened a little, ay, a great deal, if it wasn't for your brother Meehaul."

"Indeed, Lamh Laudher, you're wrong in that; my father's as bitther against you as he is. It was only on Tuesday evenin' last that they told me, one an' all they would rather see me a corpse than your wife. Indeed an' deed, John, I doubt it never can be."

"There," replied John, "I see plain enough that they'll gain you over at last. That will be the end of it: but if you choose to break the vows and promises that passed between us, you may do so."

"Oh! Lamh Laudher," said Ellen, affected at the imputation contained in his last observation; "don't *you* treat me with such suspicion. I suffer enough for your sake, as it is. For nearly two years, a day has hardly passed that my family hasn't wrung the burnin' tears from my eyes on your account. Haven't I refused matches that any young woman in my station of life ought to be proud to accept?"

"You did, Ellen, you did; but still I know how hard it is for you to hould out against the persecution you suffer at home. No, no, Ellen dear, I never doubted you for one minute. All I wondher at is, that such a girl as you ever could think of one so humble as I am, compared to what you'd have a right to expect an' could get."

"Well, but if I'm willin' to prefer you, John?" said Ellen, with a smile.

"One thing I know, Ellen," he replied, "an' that is, that I'm far from bein' worthy of you; an' I ought, if I had a high enough spirit, to try to turn you against me, if it was only that you might marry a man that 'ud have it in his power to make you happier than ever I'll be able to do; any way, than ever *it's likely* I'll be able to do."

"I don't think, John, that ever money or the wealth of the world made a man an' wife love one another yet, if they didn't do it before; but it has often put their hearts against one another."

"I agree wid you in that, Ellen; but you don't know how my heart sinks when I think of your an' my own poverty. My poor father, since the strange disappearance of little Alice, never was able to raise his head; and indeed my mother was worse. If the child had died, an' that we knew she slept with ourselves, it would be a comfort. But not to know what became of her—whether she was drowned or kidnapped—that was what crushed their hearts. I must say that since *I* grew up, we're improvin'; an' I hope, God willin', now that my father laves the management of the farm to myself, we'll still improve more an' more. I hope it for their sakes, but more, if possible, for yours. I don't know what I wouldn't do to make you happy, Ellen. If my life could do it, I think I could lay it down to show the love I bear you. I could take to the highway and rob for your sake, if I thought it would bring me means to make you happy."

Ellen was touched by his sincerity, as well as by the tone of manly sorrow with which he spoke. His last words, however, startled her, when she considered the vehement manner in which he uttered them.

"John," said she, alarmed, "never, while you have life, let me hear a word of that kind out of your lips. No—never, for the sake of heaven above us, breathe it, or think of it. But, I'll tell you something, an' you must hear it, an' bear it too, with patience."

"What is it, Ellen! If it's fair an' manly, I'll be guided by your advice."

"Meehaul has threatened to—to—I mane to say, that you musn't have any quarrel with him, if he meets you or provokes you. Will you promise this?"

"Meehaul has threatened to strike me, has he? An' I, a *Lamh Laudher*, am to take a blow from a Neil, an' to thank him, I suppose, for givin' it."

Ellen rose up and stood before him.

"Lamh Laudher," said she, "I must now try your love for me in earnest. A lie I cannot tell no more than I can cover the truth. My brother *has* threatened to strike you, an' as I said afore, you must bear it for his sister's sake."

"No, *dher Chiernai*, never. That, Ellen, is goin' beyant what I'm able to bear. Ask me to cut off my right hand for your sake, an' I'll do it; ask my life, an' I'll give it: but to ask a Lamh Laudher to bear a blow from a Neil—never. What! how could I rise my face afther such a disgrace? How could I keep the country wid a Neil's blow, like the stamp of a thief upon my forehead, an' me the first of *my own* faction, as your brother is of *his*. No—never!"

"An' you say you love me, John?"

"Betther than ever man loved woman."

"No, man—you don't," she replied; "if you did, you'd give up *something* for me. You'd bear *that* for my sake, an' not think it much. I'm beginnin' to believe, Lamh Laudher, that if I was a poor portionless girl, it wouldn't be hard to put me out of your thoughts. If it was only for my own sake you loved me, you'd not refuse me the first request I ever made to you; when you know, too, that if I didn't think more of you than I ought, I'd never make it."

"Ellen, would you disgrace me? Would you wish me to bear the name of a coward? Would you want my father to turn me out of the house? Would you want my own faction to put their feet upon me, an' drive me from among them?"

"John," she replied, bursting into tears, "I *do* know that it's a sore obligation to lay upon you, when everything's taken into account; but if you wouldn't do this for me, who would you do it for? Before heaven, John, I dread a meetin' between you an' my brother, afther what *he* tould me; an' the only way of preventin' danger is for you not to strike him. Oh, little you know what I have suffered these two days for *both* your sakes! *Lamh Laudher Oge*, I doubt it would be well for me if I had never seen your face."

"Anything undher heaven but what you want me to do, Ellen."

"Oh! don't refuse me this, John. I ask it, as I said, for *both* your sake, an' for my own sake. Meehaul wouldn't strike an unresistin' man. I won't lave you till you promise; an' if that won't do, I'll go down on my knees an' ask you for the sake

of heaven above, to be guided by me in this."

"Ellen, I'll lave the country to avoid him, if that'll plase you."

"No—no—no, John: that doesn't plase me. Is it to lave your father an' family, an' you the staff of their support? Oh, John, give me your promise. Here on my two knees I ask it from you, for my own, for your own, and for the sake of God above us! I know Meehaul. If he got a blow from you on my account, he'd never forgive it to either you or me."

She joined her hands in supplication to him as she knelt, and the tears chased each other like rain down her cheeks. The solemnity with which she insisted on gaining her point staggered Lamh Laudher not a little.

"There must be something undher this," he replied, "that makes you set your heart on it so much. Ellen, tell me the truth; what is it?"

"If I loved you less, John, an' my brother too, I wouldn't care so much about it. Remember that I'm a woman, an' on my knees before you. A blow from you would make him take your life or mine, sooner than that I should become your wife. You ought to know his temper."

"You know, Ellen, I can't at heart refuse you any thing. I will not strike your brother."

"You promise, before God, that no provocation will make you strike him."

"That's hard, Ellen; but—well, I do; before God, I won't—an' it's for *your* sake I say it. Now, get up, dear, get up. You have got me to do what no mortal livin' could bring me to but yourself. I suppose that's what made you send Nanse M'Collum for my staff?"

"Nancy M'Collum! When?"

"Why, a while ago. She tould me a quare enough story, or rather no story at all, only that you couldn't come, an' you could come, an' I was to give up my staff to her by your ordhers."

"She tould you false, John. I know nothing about what you say."

"Well, Ellen," replied Lamh Laudher, with a firm seriousness of manner, "you have brought me into danger. I doubt, without knowin' it. For *my own part*, I don't care so much. Her unlucky aunt met me comin' here this evenin', and threatened both our family and yours. I know she would sink us into the earth if she could. Either she or your brother is at the bottom of this business, whatever it is. Your brother I don't fear; but *she* is be dreaded, if all's true that's said about her."

"No, John—she surely couldn't have the heart to harm you an' me. Oh, but I'm light now, since you did what I wanted you. No harm can come between you and Meehaul; for I often heard him say, when speakin' about his faction fights, that no one but a coward would strike an unresistin' man. Now come and see me pass the Pedlar's Cairn, an' remember that you'll thank me for what I made you do this night. Come quickly—I'll be missed."

They then passed on by a circuitous and retired path that led round the orchard, until he had conducted her in safety beyond the Pedlar's Cairn, which was so called from a heap of stones that had been loosely piled together, to mark the spot as the scene of a murder, whose history, thus perpetuated by the custom of every passenger casting a stone upon the place, constituted one of the local traditions of the neighborhood.

After a tender good-night, given in a truly poetical manner under the breaking light of a May moon, he found it necessary to retrace his steps by a path which wound round the orchard, and terminated in the public entrance to the town. Along this suburban street he had advanced but a short way, when he found himself overtaken and arrested by his bitter and determined foe, Meehaul Neil. The connection betwixt the promise that Ellen had extorted from him and this rencounter with her brother flashed upon him forcibly: he resolved, however, to be guided by her wishes, and with this purpose on his part, the following dialogue took place between the heads of the rival factions. When we say, however, that Lamh Laudher was the head of his party, we beg to be understood as alluding only to his personal courage and prowess; for there were in it men of far greater wealth and of higher respectability, so far as mere wealth could confer the latter.

"Lamh Laudher," said Meehaul, "whenever a Neil spakes to you, you may know it's not in friendship."

"I know that, Meehaul Neil, without hearin' it from you. Spake, what have you to say?"

"There was a time," observed the other, "when you and I were enemies only because our *cleaveens* were enemies; but now there is, an' you know it, a blacker hatred between us."

"I would rather there was not, Meehaul; for my own part, I have no ill-will against either you or yours, an' *you know* that; so when you talk of hatred, spake only for yourself."

"Don't be mane, man," said Neil; "don't make them that hates you despise you into the bargain."

Lamh Laudher turned towards him fiercely, and his eye gleamed with passion; but he immediately recollected himself, and simply said—

"What is your business with me this night, Meehaul Neil?"

"You'll know that soon enough—sooner, maybe, than you wish. I now ask you to tell me, if you are an honest man, where you have been?"

"I am as honest, Meehaul, as any man that ever carried the name of Neil upon him, an' yet I won't tell you that, till you show me what right you have to ask me."

"I b'lieve you forget that I'm Ellen Neil's brother: now, Lamh Laudher, *as* her brother, I choose to insist on your answering me."

"Is it by *her* wish?"

"Suppose I say it is."

"Ay! but I won't suppose that, till you lay your right hand on your heart, and declare as an honest man, that—tut, man—this is nonsense. Meehaul, go home—I would rather there was friendship between us."

"You were with Ellen this night in the Grassy Quarry."

"Are you sure of that?"

"I saw you both—I watched you both; you left her beyond the Pedlar's Cairn, an' you're now on your way home."

"An' the more mane you, Meehaul, to become a spy upon a girl that you know is as pure as the light from heaven. You ought to blush for doubtin' sich a sister, or thinkin' it your duty to watch her as you do."

"Lamh Laudher, you say that you'd rather there was no ill-will between us."

"I say that, God knows, from my heart out."

"Then there's one way that it may be so. Give up Ellen; you'll find it for your own interest to do so."

"Show me that, Meehaul."

"Give her up, I say, an' then I may tell you."

"Meehaul, good-night. Go home."

They had now entered the principal street of the town, and as they proceeded in what appeared to be an earnest, perhaps a friendly conversation, many of their respective acquaintances, who lounged in the moonlight about their doors, were not a little surprised at seeing them in close conference. When Lamh Laudher wished him good night, he had reached an off street which led towards his father's house, a circumstance at which he rejoiced, as it would have been the means, he hoped, of terminating a dialogue that was irksome to both parties. He found himself, however, rather unexpectedly and rudely arrested by his companion.

"We can't part, Lamh Laudher," said Meehaul, seizing him by the collar, "till this business is settled—I mane till you promise to give my sister up."

"Then we must stand here, Meehaul, as long as we live—an' *I* surely won't do that."

"You *must* give her up, man."

"Must! Is it must from a Neil to a Lamh Laudher? You forgot yourself, Meehaul: you are rich *now*, an' I'm poor *now*; but any old friend can tell you the differ between your grandfather an' mine. Must, indeed!"

"Ay; must is the word, I say; an' I tell you that from this spot you won't go till you swear it, or this stick—an' it's a good one—will bring you to submission."

"*I* have no stick, an' I suppose I may thank you for that."

"What do you mane?" said Neil; "but no matter—I don't want it. There—to the divil with it;" and as he spoke he threw it over the roof of the adjoining house.

"Now give up my sister or take the consequence."

"Meehaul, go home, I say. You know I don't fear any single man that ever breathed; but, above all men on this earth, I wish to avoid a quarrel with *you*. Do you think, in the mean time, that even if I didn't care a straw for your sister, I could be mane enough to let myself be bullied out of her by you, or any of your faction? Never, Meehaul; so spare your breath, an' go home."

Several common acquaintances had collected about them, who certainly listened to this angry dialogue between the two faction leaders with great interest. Both were powerful men, young, strong, and muscular. Meehaul, of the two, was taller, his height being above six feet, his strength, courage, and activity, unquestionably very great. Lamh Laudher, however, was as fine a model of physical strength, just proportion, and manly beauty as ever was created; his arms, in particular, were of terrific strength, a physical advantage so peculiar to his family as to occasion the epithet by which it was known. He had scarcely uttered the reply we have written, when Meehaul, with his whole strength, aimed a blow at his stomach, which the other so far turned aside, as to bring it higher up on his chest. He staggered back, after receiving it, about seven or eight yards, but did not fall. His eye literally blazed, and for a moment he seemed disposed to act under the strong impulse of self-defence. The solemnity of his promise to Ellen, however, recurred to him in time to restrain his uplifted arm. By a strong and sudden effort he endeavored to compose himself, and succeeded. He approached Meehaul, and with as much calmness as he could assume, said—

"Meehaul, I stand before you, an' you may strike, but I won't return your blows: I have reasons for it, but I tell you the truth."

"You won't fight?" said Meehaul, with mingled rage and scorn.

"No," replied the other, "I won't fight *you*."

A murmur of "shame" and "coward" was heard from those who had been drawn together by their quarrel.

"*Dher ma chorp*," they exclaimed with astonishment, "but Lamh Laudher's afeard of him!—the *garran bane's* in him, now that he finds he has met his match."

"Why, hard fortune to you, Lamh Laudher, will you take a blow from a Neil? Are you goin' to disgrace your name?"

"I won't fight him," replied he to whom they spoke, and the uncertainty of his manner was taken for want of courage.

"Then," said Meehaul, "here, before witnesses, I give you the *coward*, that you may carry the name to the last hour of your life."

He inflicted, when uttering the words, a blow with his open hand on Lamh Laudher's cheek, after which he desired the spectators to bear witness to what he had done. The whole crowd was mute with astonishment, not a murmur more was heard; but they looked upon the two rival champions, and then upon each other with amazement. The high-minded young man had but one course to pursue. Let the consequence be what it might, he could not think for a moment of compromising the character of Ellen, nor of violating his promise, so solemnly given; with a flushed cheek, therefore, and a brow redder even with shame than indignation, he left the crowd without speaking a word, for he feared that by indulging in any further recrimination on the subject, his resolution might give way under the impetuous resentment which he curbed in with such difficulty.

Meehaul Neil paused and looked after him, equally struck with surprise and contempt at his apparent want of spirit.

"Well," he exclaimed to those who stood about him, "by the life within me, if all the parish had sworn that Lamh Laudher Oge was a coward, I'd not a b'lieved them!"

"Faix, Misther Neil, who would, no more than yourself?" they replied; "devil the likes of it ever we seen! The young fellow that no man could stand afore five minutes!"

"That is," replied others, "bekase he never met a man that *would* fight him. You see when he did, how he has turned out. One thing any how is clear enough—after this he can never *rise* his head while he lives."

CHAPTER III.

MEEHAUL now directed his steps homewards, literally stunned by the unexpected cowardice of his enemy. On approaching his father's door, he found Nell M'Collum seated on a stone bench, waiting his arrival. The moment she espied him she sprang to her feet, and with her usual eagerness of manner, caught the breast of his coat, and turning him round towards the moonlight, looked eagerly into his face.

"Well," she inquired, "did he show his fire-arms? Eh? What was done?"

"Somebody has been making a fool of you, Nell," replied Meehaul; "he had neither fire-arms, nor staff, nor any thing else; an' for my part, I might as well have left mine at home."

"Well, but, *douol*, man, what was done? Did you smash him? Did you break his bones?"

"None of that, Nell, but worse; he's disgraced for ever. I struck him, an' he refused to fight me; he hadn't a hand to raise.

"No, *Dher Chiernah*, he had not; an' he may thank Nell M'Collum for *that*. *I* put the weakness over him. But I've not done wid him yet. I'll make that family curse the day they crossed Nell M'Collum, if I should go *down* for it. Not that I have any ill will to the boy himself, but the father's heart's in him, an' that's the way, Meehaul, I'll punish the man that was the means of lavin' me as I am."

"Nell, the devil's in your heart," replied Meehaul, "if ever he was in mortal's. Lave me, woman: I can't bear your revengeful spirit, an' what is more, I don't want *you* to interfere in this business, good, bad, or indifferent. You bring about harm, Nell; but who has ever known you to do good?"

"Ay! ay!" said the hag, "that's the cuckoo song to Nell; she does harm, but never does good! Well, may my blackest curse wither the man that left Nell to hear that, as the kindest word that's spoke either to her or of her! I don't blame you. Meehaul—I blame nobody but *him* for it all. Now a word of advice before you go in; don't let on to Ellen that you know of her meetin' him this night;—an' reason good,—if she thinks you're watchin' her, she'll be on her guard—ay, an' outdo you in spite of your teeth. She's a woman—she's a woman! Good night, an' *mark* him the next time betther."

Meehaul himself had come to the same determination and from the same motive.

The consciousness of Lamh Laudher's public disgrace, and of his incapability to repel it, sank deep into his heart. The blood

A SMALL ELDER HEDGE, WHICH EXTENDED ITS BRANCHES TOWARD THE ROAD, AFFORDED LAME LAUDNER THE OBSCURITY WHICH HE WANTED.—*Dead Boxer*, chap. iii., p. 91.

in his veins became hot and feverish, when he reflected upon the scornful and degrading insult he had just borne. Soon after his return home, his father and mother both noticed the singularly deep bursts of indignant feeling with which he appeared to be agitated. For some time they declined making any inquiry as to its cause, but when they saw at length the big scalding tears of shame and rage start from his flashing eyes, they could no longer restrain their concern and curiosity.

"In the name of heaven, John," said they, "what has happened to put you in such a state as you're in?"

"I can't tell you," he replied; "if you knew it, you'd blush with burnin' shame—you'd curse me in your heart. For my part, I'd rather be dead fifty times over than livin', after what has happened this night."

"An' why not tell us, Lamh Laudher?"

"I can't father; I couldn't stand upright afore you and spake it. I'd sink like a guilty man in your presence; an' except you want to drive me distracted, or perjured, don't ask me another question about it. You'll hear it too soon."

"Well, we must wait," said the father; "but I'm sure, John, you'd not do anything unbecomin' a man. For my part, I'm not unasy on your account, for except to take an affront from a Neil, there's nothing you would do could shame me."

This was a fresh stab to the son's wounded pride, for which he was not prepared. With a stifled groan he leaped to his feet, and rushing from the kitchen, bolted himself up in his bed-room.

His parents, after he had withdrawn, exchanged glances.

"That went home to him," said the father; "an' as sure as death, the Neils are in it, whatever it is. But by the crass that saved us, if he tuck an affront from any of *them*, without payin' them home double, he is no son of mine, an' this roof won't cover him another night. Howsomever we'll see in the mornin', plase God!"

The mother, who was proud of his courage and prowess, scouted with great indignation the idea of *her* son's tamely putting up with an insult from any of the opposite faction.

"Is it he bear an affront from a Neil! arrah, don't make a fool of yourself, old man! He'd die sooner. I'd stake my life on him."

The night advanced, and the family had retired to bed; but their son attempted in vain to sleep. A sense of shame overpowered him keenly. He tossed and turned, and groaned, at the contemplation of the disgrace which he knew would be heaped on him the following day. What was to be done? How was he to wipe it off? There was but one method, he believed, of getting his hands once more free; that was to seek Ellen, and gain her permission to retract his oath on that very night. With this purpose he instantly dressed himself, and quietly unbolting his own door, and that of the kitchen, got another staff, and passed out to seek her father's inn.

The night had now become dark, but mild and agreeable; the repose of man and nature was deep, and save his own tumultuous thoughts every thing breathed an air of peace and rest. At a quick but cautious pace he soon reached the inn, and without much difficulty passed into the garden, from which he hoped to be able to make himself known to Ellen. In this, to his great mortification, he was disappointed; the room in which she slept, being on the third story, presented a window, it is true, to the garden; but how was he to reach it, or hold a dialogue with her, even should she recognize him, without being overheard by some of the family? All this might have occurred to him at home, had he been sufficiently cool for reflection. As it was, the only method of awakening her that he could think of was to throw up several handsful of small pebbles against the window. This he tried without any effect. Pebbles sufficiently large to reach the window would have broken the glass, so that he felt himself compelled to abandon every hope of speaking to her that night. With lingering and reluctant steps he left the garden, and stood for some time before the front of the house, leaning against an upright stone, called the market cross. Here he had not been more than two minutes, when he heard footsteps approaching, and on looking closely through the darkness, he recognized the figure of Nell M'Collum, as it passed directly to the kitchen window. Here the crone stopped, peered in, and with caution gave one of the panes a gentle tap. This was responded to by one much louder from within, and almost immediately the door was softly opened. From thence issued another female figure, evidently that of Nanse M'Collum, her niece. Both passed down the street in a northern direction, and Lamh Laudher, apprehensive that they were on no good errand, took off his shoes, lest his footsteps might be heard, and dogged them as they went along. They spoke little, and that in whispers, until they had got clear of the town, when, feeling less restraint, the following dialogue occurred to them:—

"Isn't it a quare thing, aunt, that *she* should come back to this place at all?"

"Quare enough, but the husband's comin' too—he's to folly her."

"He ought to know that he needn't come here, I think."

"Why, you fool, how do *you* know that? Sure the town must pay him fifty guineas, if he doesn't get a customer, and that's worth comin' for. *She* must be near us by this time. Husht! do you hear a car?"

They both paused to listen, but no car was audible.

"I do not," replied the niece; "but isn't it odd that he lets *her* carry the money, an' him trates her so badly?"

"Why would it be odd? Sure, she takes betther care of it, an' puts it farther than he does. His heart's in a farden, the nager."

"Rody an' the other will soon spare her that trouble, any way," replied the niece. "Is there no one with her but the carman?"

"Not one—hould you tongue—here's the gate where the same pair was to meet us. Who is this stranger that Rody has picked up? I hope he's the thing."

"Some red-headed fellow. Rody says he is honest. I'm wondherin', aunt, what 'ud happen if she'd know the place."

"She can't, *girshah*—an' what if she does? *She* may know the place, but will the place know her? Rody's friend says the best way is to do for her; an' I'm afeard of her, to tell you the truth—but we'll settle that when they come. There now is the gate where we'll sit down. Give a cough till we try if they're——whist! here they are!"

The voices of two men now joined the conversation, but in so low a tone, that *Lamh Laudher* could not distinctly hear its purport.

The road along which they traveled was craggy, and full of ruts, so that a car could be heard in the silence of night at a considerable distance. On each side the ditches were dry and shallow; and a small elder hedge, which extended its branches towards the road, afforded Lamh Laudher the obscurity which he wanted. With stealthy pace he crept over and sat beneath it, determined to witness whatever incident might occur, and to take a part in it, if necessary. He had scarcely seated himself when the car which they expected was heard jolting about half a mile off along the way, and the next moment a consultation took place in tones so low and guarded, that every attempt on his part to catch its purport was unsuccessful. This continued with much earnestness, if not warmth, until the car came within twenty perches of the gate, when Nell exclaimed—

"If you do, you may—but remimber *I* didn't egg you on, or put it into your hearts, at all evints. Maybe I have a child myself livin'—far from me—an' when I think of him, I feel one touch of nature at my heart in favor of her still. I'm black enough there, as it is."

"Make your mind asy," said one of them, "*you* won't have to answer for her."

The reply which was given to this could not be heard.

"Well," rejoined Nell, "I know that. Her comin' here may not be for my good; but—well, take this shawl, an' let the work be quick. The carman must be sent back with sore bones to keep him quiet."

The car immediately reached the spot where they sat, and as it passed, the two men rushed from the gate, stopped the horse, and struck the carman to the earth. One of them seized him while down, and pressed his throat, so as to prevent him from shouting. A single faint shriek escaped the female, who was instantly dragged off the car and gagged by the other fellow and Nanse M'Collum.

Lamh Laudher saw there was not a moment to be lost. With the speed of lightning he sprung forward, and with a single blow laid him who struggled with the carman prostrate. To pass then to the aid of the female was only the work of an instant. With equal success he struck down the villain with whom she was struggling. Such was the rapidity of his motions, that he had not yet had time even to speak; nor indeed did he wish at all to be recognized in the transaction. The carman, finding himself freed from his opponent, bounced to his legs, and came to the assistance of his charge, whilst Lamh Laudher, who had just flung Nanse M'Collum into the ditch, returned in time to defend both from a second attack. The contest, however, was a short one. The two ruffians, finding that there was no chance of succeeding, fled across the fields; and our humble hero, on looking for Nanse and her aunt, discovered that they also had disappeared. It is unnecessary to detail the strong terms in which the strangers expressed their gratitude to Lamh Laudher.

"God's grace be upon you, whoever you are, young man!" exclaimed the carman; "for wid His help an' your own good arm, it's my downright opinion that you saved us from bein' both robbed an' murthered."

"I'm of that opinion myself," replied Lamh Laudher.

"There is goodness, young man, in the tones of your voice," observed the female; "we may at least ask the name of the person who has saved our lives?"

"I would rather not have my name mentioned in the business," he replied; "a woman, or a devil, I think, that I don't wish to cross or provoke, has had a hand in it. I hope you haven't been robbed?" he added.

She assured him, with expressions of deep gratitude, that she had not.

"Well," said he, "as you have neither of you come to much harm, I would take it as the greatest favor you could do me, if you'd never mention a word about it to any one."

To this request they agreed with some hesitation. Lamh Laudher accompanied them into the town, and saw them safely in a decent second-rate inn, kept by a man named Luke Connor, after which he returned to his father's house, and without undressing, fell into a disturbed slumber until morning.

It is not to be supposed that the circumstances attending the quarrel between him and Meehaul Neil, on the preceding night, would pass off without a more than ordinary share of public notice. Their relative positions were too well known not to excite an interest corresponding with the characters they had borne, as the leaders of two bitter and powerful factions: but when it became certain that Meehaul Neil had struck Lamh Laudher Oge, and that the latter refused to fight him, it is impossible to describe the sensation which immediately spread through the town and parish. The intelligence was first received by O'Rorke's party with incredulity and scorn. It was impossible that he of the Strong Hand, who had been proverbial for courage, could all at once turn coward, and bear the blow from a Neil! But when it was proved beyond the possibility of doubt or misconception, that he received a blow tamely before many witnesses, under circumstances of the most degrading insult, the rage of his party became incredible. Before ten o'clock the next morning his father's house was crowded with friends and relations, anxious to hear the truth from his own lips, and all, after having heard it, eager to point out to him the only method that remained of wiping away his disgrace, namely, to challenge Meehaul Neil. His father's indignation knew no bounds; but his mother, on discovering the truth, was not without that pride and love which are ever ready to form an apology for the feelings and errors of an only child.

"You may all talk," she said; "but if Lamh Laudher Oge didn't strike him, he had good reasons for it. How do you know, an' bad cess to your tongues, all through other, how Ellen Neil would like him after weltin' her brother? Don't ye think she has the spirit of her faction in her as well as another?"

This, however, was not listened to. The father would hear of no apology for his son's cowardice but an instant challenge. Either that or to be driven from his father's roof were the only alternatives left him.

"Come out here," said the old man, for the son had not left his humble bed-room, "an' in presence of them that you have brought to shame and disgrace, take the only plan that s left to you, an' send him a challenge."

"Father," said the young man, "I have too much of your own blood in me to be afraid of any man—but for all that, I neither will nor *can* fight Meehaul Neil."

"Very well," said the father, bitterly, "that's enough. *Dher Manim*, Oonagh, you're a guilty woman; that boy's no son of mine. If he had my blood in him, he couldn't act as he did. Here, you intherloper, the door's open for you; go out of it, an' let me never see the branded face of you while you live."

The groans of the son were audible from his bed-room.

"I will go, father," he replied, "an' I hope the day will come when you'll all change your opinion of me. I can't, however, stir out till I send a message a mile or so out of town."

The old man in the mean time, wept as if his son had been dead; his tears, however, were not those of sorrow, but of shame and indignation.

"How can I help it," he exclaimed, "when I think of the way that the Neils will clap their wings and crow over us! If it was from any other family he tuck it so manely, I wouldn't care so much; but from *them!* Oh, Chiernah! it's too bad! Turn out, you villain!"

A charge of deeper disgrace, however, awaited the unhappy young man. The last harsh words of the father had scarcely been uttered, when three constables came in, and inquired if his son were at home.

"He is at home," said the father, with tears in his eyes, "and I never thought he would bring the blush to my face as he did by his conduct last night."

"I am sorry," said the principal of them, "for what has happened, both on your account and his. Do you know this hat?"

"I do know it," replied the old man; "it belongs to John. Come out here," said he, "here's Tom Breen wid your hat."

The son left his room, and it was evident from his appearance that he had not undressed at all during the night. The constables immediately observed these circumstances, which they did not fail to interpret to his disadvantage.

"Here is your hat," said the man who bore it; "one would think you were travelin' all night, by your looks."

The son thanked him for his civility, got clean stockings, and after arranging his dress, said to his father—

"I'm now ready to go, father, an' as I can't do what you want me to do, there's nothing for me but to leave the country for a while."

"He acknowledged it himself," said the father, turning to Breen; "an' in that case, how could I let the son that shamed me live undher my roof?"

"He's the last young man in the country I stand in," said Breen, "that any one who knew him would suspect to be guilty of robbery. Upon my soul, Lamh Laudher More, I'm both grieved an' distressed at it. We're come to arrest him," he added, "for the robbery he committed last night."

"Robbery!" they exclaimed with one voice.

"Ay," said the man, "robbery, no less—an' what is more, I'm afraid there's little doubt of his guilt. Why did he lave his hat at the place where the attempt was first made? He must come with us."

The mother shrieked aloud, and clapped her hands like a distressed woman; the father's brow changed from the flushed hue of indignation, and became pale with apprehension.

"Oh! no, no," he exclaimed, "John never did that. Some qualm might come over him in the other business, but—no, no—your father knows you're innocent of robbery. Yes, John, my blood *is* in you, and *there* you're wronged, my son. I know you too well, in spite of all I've said to you, to believe *that*, my true-hearted boy."

He grasped his son's hand as he spoke, and his mother at the same moment caught him in her arms, whilst both sobbed aloud. A strong sense of innate dignity expanded the brow of young Lamh Laudher. He smiled while his parents wept, although his sympathy in their sorrow brought a tear at the same time to his eye-lids. He declined, however, entering into any explanation, and the father proceeded—

"Yes! I know you are innocent, John; I can swear that you didn't leave this house from nine o'clock last night up to the present minute."

"Father," said Lamh Laudher, "don't swear that, for it would not be true, although you *think* it would. I was out the greater part of last night."

His father's countenance fell again, as did those of his friends who were present, on hearing what appeared to be almost an admission of his guilt.

"Go," said the old man, "go; naburs, take him with you. If he's guilty of this, I'll never more look upon his face. John, my heart was crushed before, but you're likely to break it out an' out."

Lamh Laudher Oge's deportment, on hearing himself charged with robbery, became dogged and sullen. The conversation, together with the sympathy and the doubt it excited among his friends, he treated with silent indignation and scorn. He remembered that on the night before, the strange woman assured him she had *not* been robbed, and he felt that the charge was exceedingly strange and unaccountable.

"Come," said he, "the sooner this business is cleared up the better. For my part, I don't know what to make of it, nor do I care much how it goes. I knew since yesterday evening, that bad luck was before me, at all events, an' I suppose it must take its course, an' that I must bear it."

The father had sat down, and now declined uttering a single word in vindication of his son. The latter looked towards him, when about to pass out, but the old man waved his hand with sorrowful impatience, and pointed to the door, as intimating a wish that he should forthwith depart from under his roof. Loaded with twofold disgrace, he left his family and his friends, accompanied by the constables, to the profound grief and astonishment of all who knew him.

They then conducted him before a Mr. Brookleigh, an active magistrate of that day, and a gentleman of mild and humane character.

CHAPTER IV.

On reaching Brookleigh Hall, Lamh Laudher found the strange woman, Nell M'Collum, Connor's servant maid, and the carman awaiting his arrival. The magistrate looked keenly at the prisoner, and immediately glanced with an expression of strong disgust at Nell M'Collum. The other female surveyed Lamh Laudher with an interest evidently deep; after which she whispered something to Nell, who frowned and shook her head, as if dissenting from what she had heard. Lamh Laudher, on his part surveyed the features of the female with an earnestness that seemed to absorb all sense of his own disgrace and danger.

"O'Rorke," said the magistrate, "this is a serious charge against you. I trust you may be able effectually to meet it."

"I must wait, your worship, till I hear fully what it is first," replied Lamh Laudher, "afther that I'm not afraid of clearin' myself from it."

The woman then detailed the circumstances of the robbery, which it appeared took place at the moment her luggage was in the act of being removed to her room, after which

she added, rather unexpectedly—"And now your worship, I have plainly stated the facts; but I must, in conscience, add, that although this woman," turning to Nell M'Collum, "is of opinion that the young man before you has robbed me, yet I cannot think he did."

"I'll swear, your worship," said Nell, "that on passin' homewards last night, seein' a car wid people about it, at Luke Connor's door, I stood behind the porch, merely to thry if I knew who they wor. I seen this Lamh Laudher wid a small oak box in his hands, an' I'll give my oath that it was open, an' that he put his hands into it, and tuck something out."

"Pray, Nell, how did it happen that you yourself were abroad at so unseasonable an hour?" said the magistrate.

"Every one knows that *I'm* out at quare hours," replied Nell; "I'm not like others. I know where I ought to be, at all times; but last night, if your worship wishes to hear the truth, I was on my way to Andy Murray's wake, the poor lad that was shepherd to the Neils."

"And pray, Nell," said his worship, "how did *you* form so sudden an acquaintance with this respectable-looking woman?"

"I knew her for years," said Nell; "I've seen her in other parts of the country often."

"You were more than an hour with her last night—were you not?" said his worship.

"She made me stay wid her," said Nell, "bekase she was a stranger, an' of coorse was glad to see a face she knew, afther the fright she got."

"All very natural, Nell; but in the mean time, she might easily have chosen a more respectable associate. Have you actually lost the sum of six hundred pounds, my good madam?"

"I have positively lost so much," replied the woman, "together with the certificate of my marriage."

"And how did you become acquainted with Nell M'Collum?" he inquired.

The stranger was silent, and blushed deeply at this question; but Nell, with more presence of mind, went over to the magistrate, and whispered something which caused him to start, look keenly at her, and then at the plaintiff.

"I must have this confirmed by herself" he said in reply to Nell's disclosure, "otherwise I shall be much more inclined to consider you the thief than O'Rorke, whose character has been hitherto unimpeachable and above suspicion."

He then beckoned the woman over to his desk, and after having first inquired if she could write, and being replied to in the affirmative, he placed a slip of paper before her, on which was written—"Is that unhappy woman called Nell M'Collum, your mother?"

"Alas! she is, sir," replied the female, with a deep expression of sorrow. The magistrate then appeared satisfied. "Now," said he, addressing O'Rorke, "state fairly and honestly what *you* have to say in reply to the charge brought against you."

"Please your worship," said the young man, "you hear the woman say that she brings *no* charge against me; but I can prove on oath, that Nell M'Collum and her niece, Nanse M'Collum, along with two men that I don't know, except that one was called Rody, met at Franklin's gate, with an intention of robing, an' it's my firm belief, of murdering this woman."

He then detailed with great earnestness the incidents and conversation of the preceding night.

"Sir," replied Nell, with astonishing promptness, "I can prove by two witnesses, that, no longer ago than last night, he said he would take to the high-road, in ordher to get money to enable him to marry Ellen Neil. Yes, you villain, Nanse M'Collum heard every word that passed between you and her in the grassy quarry; an' Ellen, your worship, can prove it too, if she's sent for."

This had little effect on the magistrate, who at no time placed any reliance on Nell's assertions; he immediately, however, dispatched a summons for Nanse M'Collum.

The carman then related all that *he* knew, every word of which strongly corroborated what Lamh Laudher had said. He concluded by declaring it to be his opinion, that the prisoner was innocent, and added, that according to the best of his belief, the box was *not* open when he left it in the plaintiff's sleeping-room above stairs.

The magistrate again looked keenly and suspiciously towards Nell. At this stage of the proceedings, O'Rorke's father and mother, accompanied by some of their friends, made their appearance. The old man, however, declined to take any part in the vindication of his son. He stood sullenly silent, with his arms folded and his brows knit, as much in indignation as in sorrow. The grief of the mother was louder, for she wept audibly.

Ere the lapse of many minutes, the constable returned, and stated that Nanse was not be found.

"She has not been at her master's house since morning," he observed, "and they don't know where she is, or what has become of her."

The magistrate immediately despatched two of the constables, with strict injunctions to secure her, if possible.

"In the mean time," he added, "I will order you, Nell M'Collum, to be strictly confined, until I ascertain whether she can be produced or not. Your haunts may be searched with some hope of success, while you are in durance; but I rather think we might seek for her in vain, if you were at liberty to regulate her motions. I cannot expect," he added, turning to the stranger, "that you should prosecute one so nearly related to you, even if you had proof, which you have not; but I am almost certain, that she has been someway or other concerned in the robbery. You are a modest, interesting woman, and I regret the loss you have sustained. At present there are no grounds for committing any of the parties charged with the robbery. This unhappy woman I commit only as a vagrant, until her niece is found, after that we shall probably be able to see somewhat farther into this strange affair."

"Something tells me, sir," replied the stranger, "that this young man is as innocent of the robbery as the child unborn. It's not my intention ever to think of prosecuting him. What I have done in the matter was against my own wishes."

"God in heaven bless you for the words!" exclaimed the parents of O'Rorke, each pressing her hand with delight and gratitude. The woman warmly returned their greetings, but instantly felt her bosom heave with a hysterical oppression under which she sank into a state of insensibility. Lamh Laudher More and his wife were proceeding to bring her towards the door for air, when Nell M'Collum insisted on a prior right to render her that service. "Begone, you servant of the devil," exclaimed the old man, "your wicked breath is bad about any one else; you won't lay a hand upon her."

"Don't let her, for heaven's sake!" said his wife; "her eye will kill the woman!"

"You are not aware," said the magistrate, "that this woman is her daughter."

"Whose daughter, please your honor," said the old man indignantly.

"Nell M'Collum's," he returned.

"It's as false as hell!" rejoined O'Rorke, "beggin' your honor's pardon for sayin' so. I mean it's false for Nell, if she says it. Nell, sir, never had a daughter, an' she knows that; but she had a son, an' she knows best what became of him."

Nell, however, resolved not to be deterred from getting the stranger into her own hands. With astonishing strength and fury she attempted to drag the insensible creature from O'Rorke's grasp; but the magistrate, disgusted at her violence, ordered two of the persons present to hold her down.

At length the woman began to recover. She sobbed aloud, and a copious flow of tears drenched her cheeks. Nell ordered her to tear herself from O'Rorke and his wife:—

"Their hands are bad about you," she exclaimed, "and their son has robbed you, Mary. Lave them, I say, or it will be worse for you."

The woman paid her no attention; on the contrary, she laid her head on the bosom of O'Rorke's wife, and wept as if her heart would break.

"God help me!" she exclaimed with a bitter sense of her situation, "I am an unhappy, an' a heart-broken woman! For many a year I have not known what it is to have a friendly breast to weep on."

She then caught O'Rorke's hand and kissed it affectionately, after which she wept afresh; "Merciful heaven!" said she—"oh, how will I ever be able to meet my husband! and such a husband! oh, heavens pity me!"

Both O'Rorke and his wife stood over her in tears. The latter bent her head, kissed the stranger, and pressed her to her bosom.

"May God bless you!" said O'Rorke himself solemnly; "trust in Him, for he can see justice done to you when man fails."

The eyes of Nell glared at the group like those of an enraged tigress: she stamped her feet upon the floor, and struck it repeatedly with her stick, as she was in the habit of doing, when moved by strong and deadly passions.

"You'll suffer for that, Mary," she exclaimed; "and as for you, Lamh Laudher More, my debt's not paid to *you* yet. Your son's a robber, an' I'll prove it before long; every one knows he's a *coward* too."

Mr. Brookleigh felt that there appeared to be something connected with the transactions of the preceding night, as well as with some of the persons who had come before him, that perplexed him not a little. He thought that, considering the serious nature of the charge preferred against young O'Rorke, he exhibited an apathy under it, that did not altogether argue innocence. Some unsettled suspicions entered his mind, but not with sufficient force to fix with certainty upon any of those present, except Nell and Nanse M'Collum who had absconded. If Nell were the woman's mother, her anxiety to bring the criminal to justice appeared very natural. Then, again, young O'Rorke's father, who seemed to know the history of Nell M'Collum, denied that she ever had a daughter. How could *he* be certain that she had not, without knowing her private life thoroughly? These circumstances appeared rather strange, if not altogether incomprehensible; so much so, indeed, that he thought it necessary, before they separated, to speak with O'Rorke's

family in private. Having expressed a wish to this effect, he dismissed the other parties, except Nell, whom he intended to keep confined until the discovery of her niece.

"Pray," said he to the father of our humble hero, "how do you know, O'Rorke, that Nell M'Collum never had a daughter?"

"Right well, your honor. I knew her since she was a child; an' from that day to this she was never six months from this town at a time. No, no—a son she had, but a daughter she never had."

"Let me ask you, young man, on what business were you abroad last night? I expect you will answer me candidly?"

"It's no matther," replied young Lamh Laudher gloomily, "my character's gone. I cannot be worse, an' I will tell no man how I spent it, till I have an opportunity of clarin' myself."

"If you spent it innocently," returned the magistrate, "you can have no hesitation in making the disclosure we require."

"I will not mention it," said the other; "I was disgraced, an' that is enough. I think but little of the robbery."

Brookleigh understood him; but the last assertion, though it exonerated him in the opinion of a man who knew something about character, went far in that of his friends who were present to establish his guilt.

They then withdrew; and it would have been much to young Lamh Laudher's advantage if this private interview had never taken place.

CHAPTER V.

THE next morning O'Rorke and his wife waited upon Mr. Brookleigh to state, that in their opinion it would be more judicious to liberate Nell M'Collum, provided he kept a strict watch upon all her motions. The magistrate instantly admitted both the force and ingenuity of the thought; and after having appointed three persons to the task of keeping her under *surveillance*, he set her at large.

This was all judicious and prudent; but in the mean time, common rumor, having first published the fact of young Lamh Laudher's cowardice, found it an easy task to associate his name with the robbery. His very father, after their last conference with the magistrate, doubted him; his friends, in the most sympathetic terms, expressed their conviction of his guilt, and the natural consequence resulting from this was, that he found himself expelled from his paternal roof, and absolutely put out of *caste*. The tide of ill fame, in fact, set in so strongly against him, that Ellen, startled as she had been by his threat of taking to the highway, doubted him. The poor young man, in truth, led a miserable life. Nanse M'Collum had not been found, and the unfavorable rumor was still at its height, when one morning the town arose and found the walls and streets placarded with what was in those days known as the fatal challenge of the DEAD BOXER!

This method of intimating his arrival had always been peculiar to that individual, who was a man of color. No person ever discovered the means by which he placarded his dreadful challenge. In an age of gross superstition, numerous were the rumors and opinions promulgated concerning this circumstance. The general impression was, that an evil spirit attended him, by whose agency his advertisements were put up at night. A law, it is said, then existed, that when a pugilist arrived in any town, he might claim the right to receive the sum of fifty guineas, provided no man in the town could be found to accept his challenge within a given period. A champion, if tradition be true, had the privilege of fixing only the place, not the mode and regulations, of battle. Accordingly the scene of contest uniformly selected by the Dead Boxer was the church-yard of the town, beside a new made grave, dug at his expense. The epithet of the Dead Boxer had been given to him, in consequence of a certain fatal stroke by which he had been able to kill every antagonist who dared to meet him; precisely on the same principle that we call a fatal marksman a *dead shot;* and the church-yard was selected, and the grave prepared, in order to denote the fatality incurred by those who went into a contest with him. He was famous, too, at athletic sports, but was never known to communicate the secret of the fatal blow; he also taught the sword exercises, at which he was considered to be a proficient.

On the morning after his arrival, the town in which we have laid the scene of this legend felt the usual impulse of an intense curiosity to see so celebrated a character. The Dead Boxer, however, appeared to be exceedingly anxious to gratify this natural propensity. He walked out from the head inn, where he had stopped, attended by his servant, merely, it would appear, to satisfy them as to the very slight chance which the stoutest of them had in standing before a man whose blow was so fatal, and whose frame so prodigiously Herculean.

Twelve o'clock was the hour at which he deemed proper to make his appearance, and as it happened also to be the market-day of

the town, the crowd which followed him was unprecedented. The old and young, the hale and feeble of both sexes, all rushed out to see, with feelings of fear and wonder, the terrible and far-famed Dead Boxer. The report of his arrival had already spread far and wide into the country, and persons belonging to every class and rank of life might be seen hastening on horseback, and more at full speed on foot, that they might, if possible, catch an early glimpse of him. The most sporting characters among the nobility and gentry of the country, fighting-peers, fire-eaters, snuff-candle squires, members of the hell-fire and jockey clubs, gaugers, gentlemen farmers, bluff yeomen, laborers, cudgel-players, parish pugilists, men of renown within a district of ten square miles, all jostled each other in hurrying to see, and if possible to have speech of, the Dead Boxer. Not a word was spoken that day, except with reference to him, nor a conversation introduced, the topic of which was not the Dead Boxer. In the town every window was filled with persons standing to get a view of him; so were the tops of the houses, the dead walls, and all the cars, gates, and available eminences within sight of the way along which he went. Having thus perambulated the town, he returned to the market-cross, which, as we have said, stood immediately in front of his inn. Here, attended by music, he personally published his challenge in a deep and sonorous voice, calling upon the corporation in right of his championship, to produce a man in ten clear days ready to undertake battle with him as a pugilist, or otherwise to pay him the sum of fifty guineas out of their own proper exchequer.

Having thus thrown down his gauntlet, the musicians played a dead march, and there was certainly something wild and fearful in the association produced by these strains of death and the fatality of encountering him. This challenge he repeated at the same place and hour during three successive days, after which he calmly awaited the result.

In the mean time, certain circumstances came to light, which not only developed many cruel and profligate traits in his disposition, but also enabled the worthy inhabitants of the town to ascertain several facts relating to his connections, which in no small degree astonished them. The candid and modest female whose murder and robbery had been planned by Nell M'Collum, resided with him as his wife: at least if he did not acknowledge her as such, no person who had an opportunity of witnessing her mild and gentle deportment, ever for a moment conceived her capable of living with him in any other character. His conduct to her, however, was brutal in the extreme, nor was his open and unmanly cruelty lessened by the misfortune of her having lost the money which he had accumulated. With Nell M'Collum he was also acquainted, for he had given orders that she should be admitted to him whenever she deemed it necessary. Nell, though now at large, found her motions watched with a vigilance which no ingenuity on her part could baffle. She knew this, and was resolved by caution to overreach those who dogged her so closely. Her intimacy with the Dead Boxer threw a shade of still deeper mystery around her own character and his. Both were supposed to be capable of entering into evil communion with supernatural beings, and both, of course, were looked upon with fear and hatred, modified, to be sure, by the peculiarity of their respective situations.

Let not our readers, however, suppose that young Lamh Laudher's disgrace was altogether lost in the wide-spread fame of the Dead Boxer. His high reputation for generous and manly feeling had given him too strong a hold upon the hearts of all who knew him, to be at once discarded by them from public conversation as an indifferent person. His conduct filled them with wonder, it is true; but although the general tone of feeling respecting the robbery was decidedly in his favor, yet there still existed among the public, particularly in the faction that was hostile to him, enough of doubt, openly expressed, to render it a duty to avoid him; particularly when this formidable suspicion was joined to the notorious fact of his cowardice in the rencounter with Meehaul Neil. Both subjects were therefore discussed with probably an equal interest; but it is quite certain that the rumor of Lamh Laudher's cowardice would alone have occasioned him, under the peculiar circumstances which drew it forth, to be avoided and branded with contumely. There was, in fact, then in existence among the rival factions in Ireland much of the military sense of honor which characterizes the British army at this day; nor is this spirit even yet wholly exploded from our humble countrymen. Poor Lamh Laudher was, therefore, an exile from his father's house, repulsed and avoided by all who had formerly been intimate with him.

There was another individual, however, who deeply sympathized in all he felt, because she knew that for her sake it had been incurred; we allude to Ellen Neil. Since the night of their last interview, she, too, had been scrupulously watched by her relations. But what vigilance can surpass the ingenuity of love? Although her former treacherous

confidant had absconded, yet the incident of the Dead Boxer's arrival had been the means of supplying her with a friend, into whose bosom she felt that she could pour out all the anxieties of her heart. This was no other than the Dead Boxer's wife; and there was this peculiarity in the interest which she took in Ellen's distress, that it was only a return of sympathy which Ellen felt in the unhappy woman's sufferings. The conduct of her husband was indefensible; for while he treated her with shameful barbarity, it was evident that his bad passions and his judgment were at variance, with respect to the estimate which he formed of her character. In her honesty he placed every confidence, and permitted her to manage his money and regulate his expenses; but this was merely because her frugality and economic habits gratified his parsimony, and fostered one of his strongest passions, which was avarice. There was something about this amiable creature that won powerfully upon the affections of Ellen Neil; and in entrusting her with the secret of her love, she she felt assured that she had not misplaced it. Their private conversations, therefore, were frequent, and their communications, unreserved on both sides, so far as woman can bestow confidence and friendship on the subject of her affections or her duty. This intimacy did not long escape the prying eyes of Nell M'Collum, who soon took means to avail herself of it for purposes which will shortly become evident.

It was about the sixth evening after the day on which the Dead Boxer had published his challenge, that, having noticed Nell from a window as she passed the inn, he dispatched a waiter with a message that she should be sent up to him. Previous to this the hag had been several times with his wife, on whom she laid serious injunctions never to disclose to her husband the relationship between them. The woman had never done so, for in fact the acknowledgement of Nell, as her mother, would have been to any female whose feelings had not been made callous by the world, a painful and distressing task. Nell was the more anxious on this point, as she feared that such a disclosure would have frustrated her own designs.

"Well, granny," said he, when Nell entered, "any word of the money?"

Nell cautiously shut the door, and stood immediately fronting him, her hand at some distance from her side, supported by her staff, and her gray glittering eyes fixed upon him with that malicious look which she never could banish from her countenance.

"The money will come," she replied, "in good time. I've a charm near ready that'll get a clue to it. I'm watchin' *him*—an' *I'm* watched myself—an' *Ellen's* watched. He has hardly a house to put his head in; but *nabocklish!* I'll bring you an' him together—ay, *dher manim*, an' I'll make him give you the first blow; afther that, if you don't give him ONE, it's your own fau't."

"Get the money first, granny. I won't give him the blow till *it* is safe."

"Won't you?" replied the beldame; "ay, *dher Creestha*, will you, whin you know what I have to tell you about him an'—an'——"

"And who, granny?"

"*Diououl*, man, but I'm afeard to tell you, for fraid you'd kill me."

"Tut, Nelly; I'd not strike an Obeah-woman," said he, laughing.

"I suspect foul play between him an'—*her*."

"Eh? Fury of hell, no!"

"He's very handsome," said the other, "an' young—far younger than you are, by thirteen—"

"Go on—go on," said the Dead Boxer, interrupting her, and clenching his fist, whilst his eyes literally glowed like live coals, "go on—I'll murder him, but not till—yes, I'll murder him at a blow—I will; but no—not till you secure the money *first*. If I give him the blow—THE BOX—I might never get it, granny. A dead man gives back nothing."

"I suspect," replied Nell, "*arraghid*—that is the money—is in other hands. Lord preserve us! but it's a wicked world, blackey."

"Where is it!" said the Boxer, with a vehemence of manner resembling that of a man who was ready to sink to perdition for his wealth. "Devil! and furies! where is it?"

"Where is it?" said the imperturbable Nell; "why, *manim a yeah*, man, sure you don't think that *I* know where it is? I suspect that your landlord's daughter, his *raal* sweetheart, knows something about it; but thin, you see, I can *prove* nothing; I only suspect. We must watch an' wait. You know *she* wouldn't prosecute him."

"We *will* watch an' wait—but I'll finish *him*. Tell me, Nell—fury of hell, woman—can it be possible—no—well—I'll murder him, though; but can it be possible that *she's* guilty? eh? She wouldn't prosecute him! —No—no—she would not."

"She is not worthy of you, blackey. Lord save us! Well, troth, I remimber whin you wor in Lord S—'s, you were a fine young man of your color. I did something for the young lord in my way then, an' I used to say, when I called to see *her*, that you wor a beauty, barrin' the face. Sure enough, there was no lie in that. Well, that was before you tuck to the fightin'; but I'm ravin'. Whisper, man. If you doubt what I'm say-

in', watch the north corner of the orchard about nine to-night, an' you'll see a meetin' between *her* an' O'Rorke. God be wid you! I must go."

"Stop!" said the Boxer; "don't—but *do* get a charm for the money."

"Good-by," said Nell; "*you* a heart wid your money! No; *damnho sherry* on the charm ever I'll get you till you show more spunk. You! My curse on the money, man, when your disgrace is consarned!"

Nell passed rapidly, and with evident indignation out of the room; nor could any entreaty on the part of the Dead Boxer induce her to return and prolong the dialogue.

She had said enough, however, to produce in his bosom torments almost equal to those of the damned. In several of their preceding dialogues, she had impressed him with a belief that young Lamh Laudher was the person who had robbed his wife; and now to the hatred that originated in a spirit of avarice, she added the deep and deadly one of jealousy. On the other hand, the Dead Boxer had, in fact, begun to feel the influence of Ellen Neil's beauty; and perhaps nothing would have given him greater satisfaction than the removal of a woman whom he no longer loved, except for those virtues which enabled him to accumulate money. And now, too, had he an equal interest in the removal of his double rival, whom, besides, he considered the spoliator of his hoarded property. The loss of this money certainly stung him to the soul, and caused his unfortunate wife to suffer a tenfold degree of persecution and misery. When to this we add his sudden passion for Ellen Neil, we may easily conceive what she must have endured. Nell, at all events, felt satisfied that she had shaped the strong passions of her savage dupe in the way best calculated to gratify that undying spirit of vengeance which she had so long nurtured against the family of Lamh Laudher. The Dead Boxer, too, was determined to prosecute his amour with Ellen Neil, not more to gratify his lawless affection for her than his twofold hatred of Lamh Laudher.

At length nine o'clock arrived, and the scene must change to the northern part of Sheemus Neil's orchard. The Dead Boxer threw a cloak around him, and issuing through the back door of the inn, entered the garden, which was separated from the orchard only by a low clipped hedge of young whitethorn, in the middle of which stood of a small gate. In a moment he was in the orchard, and from behind its low wall he perceived a female proceeding to the north side muffled like himself in a cloak, which he immediately recognized to be that of his wife. His teeth became locked together with the most deadly resentment; his features twitched with the convulsive spasms of rage, and his nostrils were distended as if his victims stood already within his grasp. He instantly threw himself over the wall, and nothing but the crashing weight of his tread could have saved the lives of the two unsuspecting persons before him. Startled, however, by the noise of his footsteps, Lamh Laudher turned round to observe who it was that followed them, and immediately the massy and colossal black now stripped of his cloak—for he had thrown it aside—stood in their presence. The female instinctively drew the cloak round her face, and Lamh Laudher was about to ask why he followed them, when the Boxer approached him in an attitude of assault.

With a calmness almost unparalleled under the circumstances, Lamh Laudher desired the female by no means to cling to him.

"If you do," said he, "I am murdered where I stand."

"No," she shrieked, "you shall not. Stand back, man, stand back. If you murder him I will take care you shall suffer for it. Stand back. Lamh Laudher never injured you."

"Ha!" exclaimed the Boxer, in reply; "why, what is this! Who have we here?"

Ellen, for it was she, had already thrown back the cloak from her features, and stepped forward between them.

"Well, I am glad it is you," said the black, "and so may he. Come, *I* shall conduct you home."

He caught her arm as he spoke, and drew her over to his side like an infant.

"Come, my pretty girl, come; I will treat you tenderly, and all I shall ask is a kiss in return. Here, young fellow," said he to Lamh Laudher, with a sense of bitter triumph, "I will show you that one black kiss is worth two white ones."

Heavy, hard, and energetic was the blow which the Dead Boxer received upon the temple, as the reply of Lamh Laudher, and dead was the crash of his tremendous body on the earth. Ellen looked around her with amazement.

"Come," said she, seizing her lover's arm, and dragging him onward: "gracious heavens! I hope you haven't killed him. Come, John, the time is short, and we must make the most of it. That villain, as I tould you before, *is* a villain. Oh! if you knew it! John, I have been the manes of your disgrace and suffering, but I am willing to do what I can to remedy that. In your disgrace, Ellen will be ready, in four days from this, to become your wife. John, come to meet me no more. I will send that villain's inno-

cent wife to your aunt Alley's, where you now live. *I* didn't expect to see you myself; but I got an opportunity, and besides she was too unwell to bring my message, which was to let you know what I now tell you."

John, ere he replied, looked behind him at the Dead Boxer, and appeared as if struck with some sudden thought.

"He is movin'," said he, "an' on this night I don't wish to meet him again; *but*—yes, Ellen, yes—God bless you for the words you've said; but how could *you* for one minute doubt me about the robbery?"

"I did not, John—I did not; and if I did, think of your own words at our meetin' in the Quarry; it was a small suspicion, though—no more. No, no; *at heart* I never doubted you."

"Ellen," said John, "hear me. You never will become my wife till my disgrace is wiped away. I love you too well ever to see you blush for your husband. My mind's made up—so say no more. Ay, an' I tell you that to live three months in this state would break my heart."

"Poor John!" she exclaimed, as they separated, and the words were followed by a gush of tears, "I know that there is not one of them, in either of the factions, so noble in heart and thought as *you* are."

"I'll prove that soon, Ellen; but never till my name is fair and clear, an' without spot, can *you* be *my* wife. Good night, dearest; in every thing but *that* I'll be guided by you."

They then separated, and immediately the Dead Boxer, like a drunken man, went tottering, rather crest-fallen, towards the inn. On reaching his own room, his rage appeared quite ungovernable; he stormed, stamped, and raved on reflecting that any one was able to knock him down. He called for brandy and water, with a curse to the waiter, swore deeply between every sip, and ultimately dispatched another messenger for Nell M'Collum.

"That Obeah woman's playing on me," he exclaimed; "because my face is black, she thinks me a fool. Furies! I neither know what she is, nor who the *other* is. But I *will* know."

"Don't be too sure of that," replied Nell, gliding into the apartment—"You can say little, blackey, or think little, avourneen, that *I'll* not know. As to who *she* is, you needn't ax—she won't be long troublin' you; an' in regard to myself, I'm what you see me. Arra, *dher ma chuirp*, man alive, I could lave you in one night that a boy in his first *breestha* (small clothes) could bate the marrow out of you."

"Where did you come from now, granny?"

"From *her* room; she's sick—that was what prevented her from meetin' Lamh Laudher."

"Granny, do you know who she is? I'm tired of her—sick of her."

"You know enough about her to satisfy you. Wasn't she a beautiful creature when Lady S—— tuck her into the family, an' reared her till she was fit to wait upon herself. Warn't you then sarvant to the ould lord, an' didn't I make her marry you, something against her will, too; but she did it to plase me. That was before 'buildin' churches' *druv* you out of the family, an' made you take to the fightin' trade."

"Granny, you must bring this young fellow across me. Blood! woman, do you know what he did? He knocked me down, granny—struck me senseless! Fury of hell! *Me!* Only for attempting to kiss his sweetheart!"

"Ha!" said Nell, bitterly, "keep that to yourself, for heaven's sake! *Dher ma chuirp*, man, if it was known, his name would be higher up than ever. Be my sowl, any how, that was the Lamh Laudher *blow*, my boy, an' what *that* is, is well known. The devil curse him for it!"

"Granny, you must assist me in three things. Find a clue to the money—bring this fellow in my way, as you promised—and help me with the landlord's daughter."

"Is there nothin' else?"

"What?"

"*She's* sick."

"Well, let her die, then; *I* don't care."

"In the *other* things I will help you," said Nell; "but you must clear your own way *there*. I can do every thing but *that*. I have a son myself, an' my hands is tied against blood till I find *him* out. I could like to see some people withered, but I can't kill."

"Well, except *her* case, we understand one another. Good night, then."

"You must work *that* for yourself. Good night."

CHAPTER VI.

In the mean time a circumstance occurred which scarcely any person who heard it could at first believe. About twelve o'clock the next day the house of Lamh Laudher More was surrounded with an immense crowd, and the whole town seemed to be in a state of peculiar animation and excitement. Groups met, stood, and eagerly accosted each other upon some topic that evidently excited equal interest and astonishment.

Lamh Laudher Oge had challenged the Dead Boxer.

True. On that morning, at an early hour, the proscribed young man waited upon the Sovereign of the town. and requested to see him. Immediately after his encounter with the black the preceding night, and while Ellen Neil offered to compensate him for the obloquy she had brought upon his name, he formed the dreadful resolution of sending him a challenge. In very few words he stated his intention to the Sovereign, who looked upon him as insane.

"No, no," replied that gentleman; "go home, O'Rorke, and banish the idea out of your head; it is madness."

"But I say *yes, yes*, with great respect to you, sir," observed Lamh Laudher. "I've been banished from my father's house, and treated with scorn by all that know me, because they think me a coward. Now I'll let them know I'm no coward."

"But you will certainly be killed," said the Sovereign.

"That's to be seen," observed the young man; "at all events, I'd as soon be killed as livin' in disgrace. I'll thank you, sir, as the head of the town, to let the black know that Lamh Laudher Oge will fight him."

"For heaven's sake, reflect a moment upon the ——"

"My mind's made up to fight," said the other, interrupting him. "No power on earth will prevent me, sir. So, if you don't choose to send the challenge, I'll bring it myself."

The Sovereign shook his head, as if conscious of what the result must be.

"That is enough," said he; "as you *are* fixed on your own destruction, the challenge will be given; but I trust you will think better of it."

"Let him know, if you please," added Lamh Laudher, "that on to-morrow at twelve o'clock we must fight."

The magistrate nodded, and Lamh Laudher immediately took his leave. In a short time the intelligence spread. From the sovereign it passed to his clerk, from the clerk to the other members of the corporation, and, ere an hour, the town was in a blaze with the intelligence.

"Did you hear what's reported?" was the general question.

Lamh Laudher Oge has challenged the Dead Boxer!

The reader already knows how bitterly public opinion had set in against our humble hero; but it would be difficult to describe, in terms sufficiently vivid, the rapid and powerful reaction which now took place in his favor. Every one pitied him, praised him, remembered his former prowess, and after finding some palliative for his degrading interview with Meehaul Neil, concluded with expressing a firm conviction that he had undertaken a fatal task. When the rumor had reached his parents, the blood ran cold in their veins, and their natural affection, now roused into energy, grasped at an object that was about to be violently removed from it. Their friends and neighbors, as we have stated, came to their house for the purpose of dissuading their son against so rash and terrible an undertaking.

"It musn't be," said they, "for whatever was over him wid Meehaul Neil, we know *now* he's no coward, an' that's enough. We musn't see him beat dead before our eyes, at all events, where is he?"

"He's at his aunt's," replied the father; "undher *this* roof he says he will never come till his fame is cleared. Heavens above! For *him* to think of fightin' a man that kills every one he fights wid!"

The mother's outcries were violent, as were those of his female relations, whilst a solemn and even mournful spirit brooded upon the countenances of his own faction. It was resolved that his parents and friends should now wait upon, and by every argument and remonstrance in their power, endeavor to change the rashness of his purpose.

The young man received them with a kind but somewhat sorrowful spirit. The father, uncovered, and with his gray locks flowing down upon his shoulders, approached him, extended his hand, and with an infirm voice said—

"Give me your hand, John. You're welcome to your father's heart an' your father's roof once more."

The son put his arms across his breast, and bowed his head respectfully, but declined receiving his father's hand.

"Not, father—father dear—not till my name is cleared."

"John," said the old man, now in tears, "will you refuse *me?* You are my only son, my only child, an' I cannot lose you. Your name *is* cleared."

"Father," said the son, "I've *sworn*—it's now too late. My heart, father, has been crushed by what has happened lately. I found little charity among my friends. I say, I cannot change my mind, for I've sworn to fight him. And even if I had not sworn, I couldn't, as a man, but do it, for he has insulted them that I love better than my own life. I knew you would want to persuade me against what I'm doin'—an' that was why I bound myself this mornin' by an oath."

The mother, who had been detained a few minutes behind them, now entered, and on hearing that he had refused to decline the battle, exclaimed—

"Who says that Lamh Laudher Oge won't obey his mother? Who dare say it? Wasn't he ever and always an obedient son to me an' his father? I won't believe that lie of my boy, no more than I ever believed a word of what was sed against him. *Shawn Oge aroon*, you won't refuse me, *avillish*. What 'ud become of me, *avich ma chree*, if you fight him? Would you have the mother's heart broken, an' our roof childless all out? We lost *one* as it is—the daughter of our heart is gone, an' we don't know how—an' now is your father an' me to lie down an' die in desolation widout a child to shed a tear over us, or to put up one prayer for our happiness?"

The young man's eyes filled with tears; but his cheek reddened, and he dashed them hastily aside.

"No, my boy, my glorious boy, won't refuse to save his mother's heart from breakin'; ay, and his gray-haired father's too—he won't kill us both—my boy won't,—nor send us to the grave before our time!"

"Mother," said he, "if I could I—Oh! no, no. Now, it's too late—if I didn't fight him, I'd be a perjured man. You know," he added, smiling, "there's something in a Lamh Laudher's blow, as well as in the Dead Boxer's. Isn't it said, that a Lamh Laudher needn't strike two blows, when he sends his strength with one."

He stretched out his powerful arm, as he spoke, with a degree of pride, not unbecoming his youth, spirit, and amazing strength and activity.

"Do not," he added, "either vex me, or sink my spirits. I'm sworn, an' I'll fight him. That's my mind, and it will not change."

The whole party felt, by the energy and decision with which he spoke the last words, that he was immovable. His resolution filled them with melancholy, and an absolute sense of death. They left him, therefore, in silence, with the exception of his parents, whose grief was bitter and excessive.

When the Dead Boxer heard that he had been challenged, he felt more chagrin than satisfaction, for his avarice was disappointed; but when he understood from those members of the corporation who waited on him, that Lamh Laudher was the challenger, the livid fire of mingled rage and triumph which blazed in his large bloodshot eyes absolutely frightened the worthy burghers.

"I'm glad of that," said he—"here, Joe, I desire you to go and get a coffin made, six feet long and properly wide—we will give him room enough; tchee! tchee! tchee!—ah! tchee! tchee! tchee! I'm glad, gentlemen. Herr! agh! tchee! tchee! I'm glad, *I'm glad.*"

In this manner did he indulge in the wild and uncouth glee of a savage as ferocious as he was powerful.

"We have a quare proverb here, Misther Black," said one of the worthy burghers, "that, be my sowl, may be you never heard!"

"Tchee! tchee! agh! What is that?" said the Boxer, showing his white teeth and blubber lips in a furious grin, whilst the eyes which he fastened on the poor burgher blazed up once more, as if he was about to annihilate him.

"What is it, sar?"

"Faith," said the burgher, making towards the door, "I'll tell you that when I'm the safe side o' the room—devil a ha'porth barrin' that neither you nor any man ought to reckon your chickens before they are hatched. Make money of *that;*" and after having discharged this pleasantry at the black, the worthy burgher made a hasty exit down stairs, followed at a more dignified pace by his companions.

The Dead Boxer, in preparing for battle, observed a series of forms peculiar to himself, which were certainly of an appalling character. As a proof that the challenge was accepted, he ordered a black flag, which he carried about with him, to wave from a window of the inn, a circumstance which thrilled all who saw it with an awful certainty of Lamh Laudher's death. He then gave orders for the drums to be beaten, and a dead march to be played before him, whilst he walked slowly up the town and back, conversing occasionally with some of those who immediately surrounded him. When he arrived nearly opposite the market-house, some person pointed out to him a small hut that stood in a situation isolated from the other houses of the street.

"There," added his informant, "is the house where *Lamh Laudher Oge's* aunt lives, and where he himself has lived since he left his father's."

"Ah!" said the black, pausing, "is he within, do you think?"

One of the crowd immediately inquired, and replied to him in affirmative.

"Will any of you," continued the boxer, "bring me over a half-hundred weight from the market crane? I will show this fellow what a poor chance he has. If he is so strong in the arm and active as is reported, I desire he will imitate me. Let the music stop a moment."

The crowd was now on tiptoe, and all necks were stretched over the shoulders of those who stood before them, in order to see, if possible, what the feat could be which he intended to perform. Having received

the half-hundred weight from the hands of the man who brought it, he approached the widow's cottage, and sent in a person to apprize *Lamh Laudher* of his intention to throw it over the house, and to request that he would witness this proof of his strength. Lamh Laudher delayed a few minutes, and the Dead Boxer stood in the now silent crowd, awaiting his appearance, when accidentally glancing into the door, he started as if stung by a serpent. A flash and a glare of his fierce blazing eyes followed.

"Ha! damnation! true as hell!" he exclaimed, "*she's* with him! Ha!—the Obeah woman was right—the Obeah woman was right. Guilt, guilt, guilt! Ha!"

With terror and fury upon his huge dark features, he advanced a step or two into the cottage, and in a voice that resembled the under-growl of an enraged bull, said to his wife, for it was she—"*You* will *never* repeat this—I am aware of you; I know you now! Fury! prepare yourself; I say so to BOTH. Ha!" Neither she nor Lamh Laudher had an opportunity of replying to him, for he ran in a mood perfectly savage to the half-hundred weight, which he caught by the ring, whirled it round him two or three times, and, to the amazement of the mob who were crowded about him, flung it over the roof of the cottage.

Lamh Laudher had just left the cabin in time to witness the feat, as well as to observe more closely the terrific being in his full strength and fury, with whom he was to wage battle on the following day. Those who watched his countenance, observed that it blanched for a moment, and that the color came and went upon his cheek.

"Now, young fellow," said the Boxer, "get behind the cabin and throw back the weight."

Lamh Laudher hesitated, but was ultimately proceeding to make the attempt, when a voice from the crowd, in tones that were evidently disguised, shouted—

"Don't be a fool, young man; husband your strength, for you will want it."

The Dead Boxer started again—"Ha!" he exclaimed, after listening acutely, "fury of hell! are you there? ha! I'll grasp *you* yet, though."

The young man, however, felt the propriety of this friendly caution. "The person who spoke is right," said he, "whoever he is. I *will* husband my strength," and he passed again into the cabin.

The boxer's countenance exhibited dark and flitting shadows of rage. That which in an European cheek would have been the redness of deep resentment, appeared, on his, as the scarlet blood struggled with the gloomy hue of his complexion, rather like a tincture that seemed to borrow its character more from the darkness of his soul, than from the color of his skin. His brow, black and lowering as a thunder-cloud, hung fearfully over his eyes, which he turned upon Lamh Laudher when entering the hut, as if he could have struck him dead with a look. Having desired the drums to beat, and the dead march to be resumed, he proceeded along the streets until he arrived at the inn, from the front of which the dismal flag of death flapped slowly and heavily in the breeze. At this moment the death-bell of the town church tolled, and the sexton of the parish bustled through the crowd to inform him that the grave which he had ordered to be made was ready.

The solemnity of these preparations, joined to the almost superhuman proof of bodily strength which he had just given, depressed every heart, when his young and generous adversary was contrasted with him. Deep sorrow for the fate of Lamh Laudher prevailed throughout the town; the old men sighed at the folly of his rash and fatal obstinacy, and the females shed tears at the sacrifice of one whom all had loved. From the inn, hundreds of the crowd rushed to the church-yard, where they surveyed the newly-made grave with shudderings and wonder at the strangeness of the events which had occurred in the course of the day. The death music, the muffled drums, the black flag, the mournful tolling of the sullen bell, together with the deep grave that lay open before them, appeared rather to resemble the fearful pageant of a gloomy dream, than the reality of incidents that actually passed before their eyes. Those who came to see the grave departed with heaviness and a sad foreboding of what was about to happen; but fresh crowds kept pouring towards it for the remainder of the day, till the dusky shades of a summer night drove them to their own hearths, and left the church-yard silent.

The appearance of the Dead Boxer's wife in the house where Lamh Laudher resided, confirmed, in its worst sense, that which Nell M'Collum had suggested to him. It is unnecessary to describe the desolating sweep of passion which a man, who, like him, was the slave of strong resentments, must have suffered. It was not only from motives of avarice and a natural love of victory that he felt anxious to fight: to these was now added a dreadful certainty that Lamh Laudher was the man in existence who had inflicted on him an injury, for which nothing but the pleasure of crushing him to atoms with his hands, could atone. The approaching battle

therefore, with his direst enemy, was looked upon by the Dead Boxer as an opportunity of glutting his revenge. When the crowd had dispersed, he called a waiter, and desired him to inquire if his wife had returned. The man retired to ascertain, and the Boxer walked backwards and forwards in a state of mind easily conceived, muttering curses and vows of vengeance against her and Lamh Laudher. After some minutes he was informed that she had not returned, upon which he gave orders that on the very instant of her appearance at the inn, she should be sent to him. The waiter's story in this instance was incorrect; but the wife's apprehension of his violence, overcame every other consideration, and she resolved for some time to avoid him. He had, in fact, on more than one occasion openly avowed his jealousy of her and O'Rorke, and that in a manner which made the unhappy woman tremble for her life. She felt, therefore, from what had just occurred at Widow Rorke's cabin, that she must separate herself from him, especially as he was susceptible neither of reason nor remonstrance. Every thing conspired to keep his bad passions in a state of tumult. Nell M'Collum, whom he wished to consult once more upon the recovery of his money, could not be found. This, too, galled him; for avarice, except during the whirlwind of jealousy, was the basis of his character—the predominant passion of his heart. After cooling a little, he called for his servant, who had been in the habit of acting for him in the capacity of second, and began, with his assistance, to make preparations for to-morrow's battle.

CHAPTER VII.

Nothing now could exceed the sympathy which was felt for young Lamh Laudher, yet except among his immediate friends, there was little exertion made to prevent him from accelerating his own fate. So true is it that public feeling scruples not to gratify its appetite for excitement, even at the risk or actual cost of human life. His parents and relations mourned him as if he had been already dead. The grief of his mother had literally broken down her voice so much, that from hoarseness, she was almost unintelligible. His aged father sat and wept like a child; and it was in vain that any of their friends attempted to console them. During the latter part of the day, every melancholy stroke of the death bell pierced their hearts; the dead march, too, and the black flag waving, as if in triumph over the lifeless body of their only son, the principal support of their declining years, filled them with a gloom and terror, which death, in its common shape, would not have inspired. This savage pageant on the part of the Dead Boxer, besides being calculated to daunt the heart of any man who might accept his challenge, was a cruel mockery of the solemnities of death. In this instance it produced such a sensation as never had been felt in that part of the country. An uneasy feeling of wild romance, mingled with apprehension, curiosity, fear, and amazement, all conspired to work upon the imaginations of a people in whom that quality is exuberant, until the general excitement became absolutely painful.

Perhaps there was not one among his nearest friends who felt more profound regret for having been the occasion of his disgrace, and consequently of the fate to which he had exposed him, than Meehaul Neil. In the course of that day he sent his father to old Lamh Laudher, to know if young O'Rorke would grant him an interview, the object of which was to dissuade him from the battle.

"Tell him," said the latter, with a composure still tinged with a sorrowful spirit, "that I will not see him to-day. To-morrow I may, and if I don't, tell him, that for his sister's sake, he has my forgiveness."

The introduction of the daughter's name shortened the father's visit, who left him in silence.

Ellen, however, had struggles to endure which pressed upon her heart with an anguish bitter in proportion to the secrecy rendered necessary by the dread of her relations. From the moment she heard of Lamh Laudher's challenge, and saw the funeral appendages with which the Dead Boxer had darkened the preparations for the fight, she felt her heart sink, from a consciousness that she had been indirectly the murderess of her lover. Her countenance became ghastly pale, and her frame was seized with a tremor which she could hardly conceal. She would have been glad to have shed tears, but tears were denied her. Except the Boxer's wife, there was no one to whom she could disclose her misery; but alas! for once, that amiable creature was incapable of affording her consolation. She herself, felt distress resulting from both the challenge, and her husband's jealousy, almost equal to that of Ellen.

"I know not how it is," said she, "but I cannot account for the interest I feel in that young man. Yes, surely, it is natural, when we consider that I owe my life to him. Still, independently of that, I never heard his voice, that it did not fall upon my heart like the voice of a friend. We must, if possible, change his mind," she added, wiping away

her tears; "for I know that if he fights that terrible man, he will be killed."

At Ellen's request, she consented to see Lamh Laudher, with a view of entreating him, in her name, to decline the fight. Nor were her own solicitations less urgent. With tears and grief which could not be affected, she besought him not to rush upon certain death—said that Ellen could not survive it—pleaded the claims of his aged parents, and left no argument untouched that could apply to his situation and conduct. Lamh Laudher, however, was inexorable, and she relinquished an attempt that she felt to be ineffectual. The direction of her husband's attention so unexpectedly to widow Rorke's cabin, at that moment, and his discovery of her interview with Lamh Laudher, determined her, previously acquainted as she had been with his jealousy, to keep out of his reach, until some satisfactory explanation could be given. Ellen, however, could not rest; her grief had so completely overborne all other considerations, that she cared little, now, whether her friends perceived it or not. On one thing, she was fixed, and that was, to prevent Lamh Laudher from encountering the Dead Boxer. With this purpose she wrapped herself in a cloak about ten o'clock, and careless whether she was observed or not, went directly towards his aunt's house. About two-thirds of the way had probably been traversed, when a man, wrapped up in a cloak, like herself, accosted her in a low voice, not much above a whisper.

"Miss Neil," said he, "I don't think it would be hard to guess where you are going."

"Who are you that asks?" said Ellen.

"No matter; but if you happen to see young O'Rorke to-night, I have a message to send him that may serve him."

"Who are you?" again inquired Ellen.

"One that cautions *you* to beware of the Dead Boxer; one that pities and respects his unfortunate wife; and one who, as I said, can serve O'Rorke."

"For God's sake, then, if you can, be quick; for there's little time to be lost," said Ellen.

"Give him this message," replied the man, and he whispered half a dozen words into her ear.

"Is *that* true?" she asked him; "and may he depend upon it?"

"He may, as there's a God above me. Good night!" He passed on at a rapid pace.

When Ellen entered his aunt's humble cabin, *Lamh Laudher* had just risen from his knees. Devotion, or piety if you will, as it is in many cases, though undirected by knowledge, may be frequently found among the peasantry associated with objects that would appear to have little connection with it. When he saw her he exclaimed with something like disappointment:—

"Ah! Ellen dear, why did *you* come? I would rather *you* hadn't crossed me now, darling."

His manner was marked by the same melancholy sedateness which we have already described. He knew the position in which he stood, and did not attempt to disguise what he felt. His apparent depression, however, had a dreadful effect upon Ellen, who sat down on a stool, and threw back the hood of her cloak; but the aunt placed a little circular arm-chair for her somewhat nearer the fire. She declined it in a manner that argued something like incoherence. which occasioned O'Rorke to glance at her most earnestly. He started, on observing the wild lustre of her eye, and the woebegone paleness of her cheek.

"Ellen," said he, "how is this? Has any thing frightened you? Merciful mother! aunt, look at her!"

The distracted girl sank before him on her knees, locked her hands together, and while her eyes sparkled with an unsettled light, exclaimed—

"John!—John!—Lamh Laudher Oge—forgive me, *before you die!* *I* have murdered you!"

"Ellen love, Ellen"—

"Do you *forgive* me? *do* you? Your blood is upon me, Lamh Laudher Oge!"

"Heavens above! Aunt, she's turned! Do I forgive *you*, my heart's own treasure? How did you ever offend me, my darling? You know you never did. But *if* you ever did, my own Ellen, I *do* forgive you."

"But *I* murdered you—and that was because my brother said *he* would do it—an' I got afraid, John, that he might do you harm, an' afraid to tell you too—an'—an' so you promise me you won't fight the Dead Boxer? Thank God! thank God! then your blood will *not* be upon *me!*"

"Aunt, she's lost," he exclaimed; "the brain of my *colleen dhas* is turned!"

"John, won't you save *me* from the Dead Boxer? There's nobody able to do it but you, Lamh Laudher Oge!"

"Aunt, aunt, my girl's destroyed," said John, "her heart's broke! Ellen!"

"But to-morrow, John—to-morrow—sure you won't fight him to-morrow?—if you do—if you do he'll kill you—an' 'twas *I* that—that"——

O'Rorke had not thought of raising her from the posture in which she addressed him, so completely had he been overcome by the frantic vehemence of her manner. He

now snatched her up, and placed her in the little arm-chair alluded to; but she had scarcely been seated in it, when her hands became clenched, her head sank, and the heavy burthen of her sorrows was forgotten in a long fit of insensibility.

Lamh Laudher's distraction and alarm prevented him from rendering her much assistance; but the aunt was more cool, and succeeded with considerable difficulty in restoring her to life. The tears burst in thick showers from her eyelids, she drew her breath vehemently and rapidly, and, after looking wildly around her, indulged in that natural grief which relieves the heart by tears. In a short time she became composed, and was able to talk collectedly and rationally.

This, indeed, was the severest trial that Lamh Laudher had yet sustained. With all the force of an affection as strong and tender as it was enduring and disinterested, she urged him to relinquish his determination to meet the Dead Boxer on the following day. John soothed her, chid her, and even bantered her, as a cowardly girl, unworthy of being the sister of Meehaul Neil, but to her, as well as to all others who had attempted to change his purpose, he was immovable. No; the sense of his disgrace had sunk too deep into his heart, and the random allusions just made by Ellen herself to the Dead Boxer's villainy, but the more inflamed his resentment against him.

On finding his resolution irrevocable, she communicated to him in a whisper the message which the stranger had sent him. Lamh Laudher, after having heard it, raised his arm rapidly, and his eye gleamed with something like the exultation of a man who has discovered a secret that he had been intensely anxious to learn. Ellen could now delay no longer, and their separation resembled that of persons who never expected to meet again. If Lamh Laudher could at this moment have affected even a show of cheerfulness, in spite of Ellen's depression it would have given her great relief. Still, on her part, their parting was a scene of agony and distress which no description could reach, and on his, it was sorrowful and tender; for neither felt certain that they would ever behold each other in life again.

A dark sunless morning opened the eventful day of this fearful battle. Gloom and melancholy breathed a sad spirit over the town and adjacent country. A sullen breeze was abroad, and black clouds drifted slowly along the heavy sky. The Dead Boxer again had recourse to his pageantries of death. The funeral bell tolled heavily during the whole morning, and the black flag flapped more dismally in the sluggish blast than before. At an early hour the town began to fill with myriads of people. Carriages and cars, horsemen and pedestrians, all thronged in one promiscuous stream towards the scene of interest. A dense multitude stood before the inn, looking with horror on the death flag, and watching for a glimpse of the fatal champion. From this place hundreds of them passed to the house of Lamh Laudher More, and on hearing that the son resided in his aunt's they hurried towards her cabin to gratify themselves with a sight of the man who dared to wage battle with the Dead Boxer. From this cabin, as on the day before, they went to the church-yard, where a platform had already been erected beside the grave. Against the railings of the platform stood the black coffin intended for Lamh Laudher, decorated with black ribbons that fluttered gloomily in the blast. The sight of this and of the grave completed the wonder and dread which they felt. As every fresh mass of the crowd arrived, low murmurs escaped them, they raised their heads and eyes exclaiming—

"Poor Lamh Laudher! God be merciful to him!"

As the morning advanced, O'Rorke's faction, as a proof that they were determined to consider the death of their leader as a murder, dressed themselves in red ribbons, a custom occasionally observed in Ireland even now, at the funerals of those who have been murdered. Their appearance passing to and fro among the crowd made the scene with all its associations absolutely terrible. About eleven o'clock they went in a body to widow Rorke's, for the purpose of once more attempting to dissuade him against the fight. Here most unexpected intelligence awaited them—LAMH LAUDHER OGE HAD DISAPPEARED. The aunt stated that he had left the house with a strange man, early that morning, and that he had not returned. Ere many minutes the rumor was in every part of the town, and strong disappointment was felt, and expressed against him in several round oaths, by the multitude in general. His father, however, declared his conviction that his son would not shrink from what he had undertaken, and he who had not long before banished him for cowardice, now vouched for his courage. At the old man's suggestion, his friends still adhered to their resolutions of walking to the scene of conflict in a body.

At twenty minutes to twelve o'clock, the black flag was removed from the inn window, the muffled drums beat, and the music played the same dead march as on the days of uttering the challenge. In a few minutes the Dead Boxer, accompanied by some of the

neighboring gentry, made his appearance, preceded by the flag. From another point, the faction of Lamh Laudher fluttering in blood-red ribbons, marched at a solemn pace towards the church-yard. On arriving opposite his aunt's, his mother wept aloud, and with one voice all the females who accompanied her, raised the Irish funeral cry. In this manner, surrounded by all the solemn emblems of death, where none was dead, they slowly advanced until they reached the platform. The Dead Boxer, attended by his own servant, as second, now ascended the stage, where he stood for a few minutes, until his repeater struck twelve. That moment he began to strip, which having done, he advanced to the middle of the stage, and in a deep voice required the authorities of the town to produce their champion. To this no answer was returned, for not a man of them could account for the disappearance of Lamh Laudher. A wavy motion, such as passes over the forest top under a low blast, stirred the whole multitude; this was the result of many feelings, but that which prevailed amongst them was dissapointment. A second time the Dead Boxer repeated the words, but except the stir and hum which we have described, there was not a voice heard in reply. Lamh Laudher's very friends felt mortified, and the decaying spirit of Lamh Laudher More rallied for a moment. His voice alone was heard above the dead silence,—

"He *will* come, black," said he, "my son will come; and I would now rather see him dead than that he should fear to be a man."

He had scarcely spoken, when a loud cheer, which came rapidly onward, was heard outside the church-yard. A motion and a violent thrusting aside, accompanied by a second shout, "he's here!" gave intimation of his approach. In about a minute, to the manifest delight of all present, young Lamh Laudher, besmeared with blood, leaped upon the platform. He looked gratefully at the crowd, and in order to prevent perplexing inquiries, simply said—

"Don't be alarmed—I had a slight accident, but I'm not the worse of it."

The cheers of the multitude were now enough to awaken the dead beneath them; and when they had ceased, his father cried out—

"God support you, boy—you're my true son; an' I know you'll show them what the Lamh Laudher blood an' the Lamh Laudher blow is."

The young man looked about him for a moment, and appeared perplexed.

"I'm here alone," said he; "is there any among you that will second me?"

Hundreds immediately volunteered this office; but there was *one* who immediately sprung upon the stage, to the no small surprise of all present—it was Meehaul Neil. He approached Lamh Laudher and extended his hand, which was received with cordiality.

"Meehaul," said O'Rorke, "I thank you for this."

"Do not," replied the other; "no man has such a *right* to stand by you *now* as I have. I never knew till this mornin' why you did not strike me the last night we met."

The Dead Boxer stood with his arms folded, sometimes looking upon the crowd, and occasionally glaring at his young and fearless antagonist. The latter immediately stripped, and when he stood out erect and undaunted upon the stage, although his proportions were perfect, and his frame active and massy, yet when measured with the Herculean size of the Dead Boxer, he appeared to have no chance.

"Now," said he to the black, "by what rules are we to fight?"

"If you consult *me*," said the other, "perhaps it is best that every man should fight as he pleases. You decide that. I am the challenger."

"Take your own way, then," said O'Rorke; "but you have a secret, black—do you intend to use it?"

"Certainly, young fellow."

"I have *my* secret, too," said Lamh Laudher; "an' now I give you warning that I will put it in practice."

"All fair; but we are losing time," replied the man of color, putting himself in an attitude. "Come on."

Their seconds stood back, and both advanced to the middle of the stage. The countenance of the black, and his huge chest, resembled rather a colossal statue of bronze, than the bust of a human being. His eye gleamed at Lamh Laudher with baleful flashes of intense hatred. The spectators saw, however, that the dimensions of Lamh Laudher gained considerably by his approximation to the black. The dusky color of the Boxer added apparently to his size, whilst the healthful light which lay upon the figure of his opponent took away, as did his elegance, grace, and symmetry, from the uncommon breadth and fulness of his bust.

Several feints were made by the black, and many blows aimed, which Lamh Laudher, by his natural science and activity, parried; at length a blow upon the temple shot him to the boards with great violence, and the hearts of the spectators, which were all with him, became fearfully depressed.

Meehaul flew to his assistance, and O'Rorke, having been raised, shook his head as if to throw off the influence of the blow. Neil afterwards declared that when coming to the second round, resentment and a sense of having suffered in the opinion of the multitude by the blow which brought him down, had strung his muscular power into such a state of concentration, that his arms became as hard as oak. On meeting again he bounded at the Boxer, and by a single blow upon the eye-brow felled him like an ox. So quickly was it sent home, that the black had not activity to guard against it; on seeing which, a short and exulting cheer rose from the multitude. We are not now giving a detailed account of this battle, as if reporting it for a newspaper; it must suffice to say, that Lamh Laudher was knocked down twice, and the Dead Boxer four times, in as many rounds. The black, on coming to the seventh round, laughed, whilst the blood trickled down his face. His frame appeared actually agitated with inward glee, and indeed a more appalling species of mirth was never witnessed.

It was just when he approached Lamh Laudher, chuckling hideously, his black visage reddened with blood, that a voice from the crowd shouted—

"He's laughing—the blow's coming—O'Rorke, remember your instructions."

The Boxer advanced, and began a series of feints, with the intention of giving that murderous blow which he was never known to miss. But before he could put his favorite stratagem in practice, the activity of O'Rorke anticipated his *ruse*, for in the dreadful energy of his resentment he not only forgot the counter-secret which had been confided to him, but every other consideration for the moment. With the spring of a tiger he leaped towards the black, who by the act was completely thrown off his guard. This was more than O'Rorke expected. The opportunity, however, he did not suffer to pass; with the rapidity of lightning he struck the savage on the neck, immediately under the ear. The Dead Boxer fell, and from his ears, nostrils, and mouth the clear blood sprung out, streaking, in a fearful manner, his dusky neck and chest. His second ran to raise him, but his huge woolly head fell from side to side with an appearance of utter lifelessness. In a few minutes, however, he rallied, and began to snort violently, throwing his arms and limbs about him with a quivering energy, such as, in strong men who die unwasted by disease, frequently marks the struggle of death. At length he opened his eyes, and after fastening them upon his triumphant opponent with one last glare of hatred, jealousy, and despair, he ground his teeth, clenched his gigantic hands, and stammering out, "Fury of hell! I—I—damnation!" This was his last exclamation, for he suddenly plunged again, extended his shut fist towards Lamh Laudher, as if he would have crushed him even in death, then becoming suddenly relaxed, his head fell upon his shoulder, and after one groan, he expired on the very spot where he had brought together the apparatus of death for another.

CHAPTER VIII.

When the spectators saw and heard what had occurred, their acclamations rose to the sky; cheer after cheer pealed from the graveyard over a wide circuit of the country. With a wild luxury of triumph they seized O'Rorke, placed him on their shoulders, and bore him in triumph through every street in the town. All kinds of mad but good-humored excesses were committed. The public houses were filled with those who had witnessed the fight, songs were sung, healths were drank, and blows given. The streets, during the remainder of the day, were paraded by groups of his townsmen belonging to both factions, who on that occasion buried their mutual animosity in exultation for his victory.

The worthy burghers of the corporation, who had been both frightened and disgusted at the dark display made by the Dead Boxer previous to the fight, put his body in the coffin that had been intended for Lamh Laudher, and without any scruple, took it up, and went in procession with the black flag before them, the death bell again tolling, and the musicians playing the dead march, until they deposited his body in the inn.

After Lamh Laudher had been chaired by the people, and borne throughout every nook of the town, he begged them to permit him to go home. With a fresh volley of shouts and hurras they proceeded, still bearing him in triumph towards his father's house, where they left him, after a last and deafening round of cheers. Our readers can easily fancy the pride of his parents and friends on receiving him.

"Father," said he, "my name's cleared. I hope I have the Lamh Laudher blood in me still. Mother, you never doubted me, but you wor forced to give way."

"My son, my son," said the father, embracing him, "my noble boy! There never was one of your name like you. You're the flower of us all!"

The mother wept with joy, and pressed him repeatedly to her heart; and all his relations were as profuse as they were sincere in their congratulations.

"One thing troubles us," observed his parents, "what will become of his wife? John dear," said his mother, "my heart aches for her."

"God knows and so does mine," exclaimed the father; "there is goodness about her."

"She is freed from a tyrant and a savage," replied their son, "for he was both, and she ought to be thankful that she's rid of him. But you don't know that there was an attempt made on my life this mornin'."

On hearing this, they were all mute with astonishment.

"In the name of heaven how, John?" they inquired with one voice.

"A red-haired man came to my aunt's," he continued, "early this mornin', an' said if I wanted to hear something for my good, I would follow him. I did so, an' I observed that he eyed me closely as we went along. We took the way that turns up the Quarry, an' afther gettin' into one of the little fir groves off the road, he made a stab at my neck, as I stooped to tie my shoe that happened to be loose. As God would have it, he only tore the skin above my forehead. I pursued the villain on the spot, but he disappeared among the trees, as if the earth had swallied him. I then went into Darby Kavanagh's, where I got my breakfast; an' as I was afraid that you might by pure force prevent me from meetin' the black, I didn't stir out of it till the proper time came."

This startling incident occasioned much discussion among his friends, who of course were ignorant alike of the person who had attempted his assassination, and of the motives which could have impelled him to such a crime. Several opinions were advanced upon the circumstance, but as it had failed, his triumph over the Dead Boxer, as unexpected as it was complete, soon superseded it, and many a health was given "to the best man that ever sprung from the blood of the Lamh Laudhers!" for so they termed him, and well had he earned the epithet. At this moment an incident occurred which considerably subdued their enjoyment. Breen, the constable, came to inform them that Nell McCollum, now weltering in her blood, and at the point of death, desired instantly to see them.

Our readers have been, no doubt, somewhat surprised at the sudden disappearance of Nell. This artful and vindictive woman had, as we have stated, been closely dogged through all her turnings and windings, by the emissaries of Mr. Brookleigh. For this reason she kept aloof from the particular haunt where she was in the habit of meeting her private friends. The preparations, however, for the approaching fight, and the tumult it excited in the town, afforded her an opportunity of giving her spies the slip. She went, on the evening before the battle, to a small dark cabin in one of the most densely inhabited parts of the town, where, secure in their privacy, she found Nanse M'Collum, who had never left the town since the night of the robbery, together with the man called Rody, and another hardened ruffian with red hair.

"*Dher ma chuirp*," said she, without even a word of precious salutation, "but I'll lay my life that Lamh Laudher bates the black. In that case he'd be higher up wid the town than ever. He knocked him down last night."

"Well," said Rody, "an' what if he does? I would feel rather satisfied at that circumstance. I served the black dog for five years, and a more infernal tyrant never existed, nor a milder or more amiable woman than his wife. Now that you have his money, the sooner the devil gets himself the better."

"To the black *diouol* wid yourself an' your Englified *gosther*," returned Nell indignantly; "his wife! *Damno' orth*, don't make my blood boil by speaking a word in *her* favor. If Lamh Laudher comes off best, all I've *struv* for is knocked on the head. *Dher Chiernah*, I'll crush the sowl of his father or I'll not die happy."

"Nell, you're bittherer than soot, and blacker too," observed Rody.

"Am I?" said Nell, "an' is it from the good crathur that was ready, the other night, to murdher the mild innocent woman that he spakes so well of, that we hear sich discoorse?"

"You're mistaken there, Nelly," replied Rody; "I had no intention of taking away her life, although I believe my worthy comrade here in the red hair, that I helped out of a certain gaol once upon a time, had no scruples."

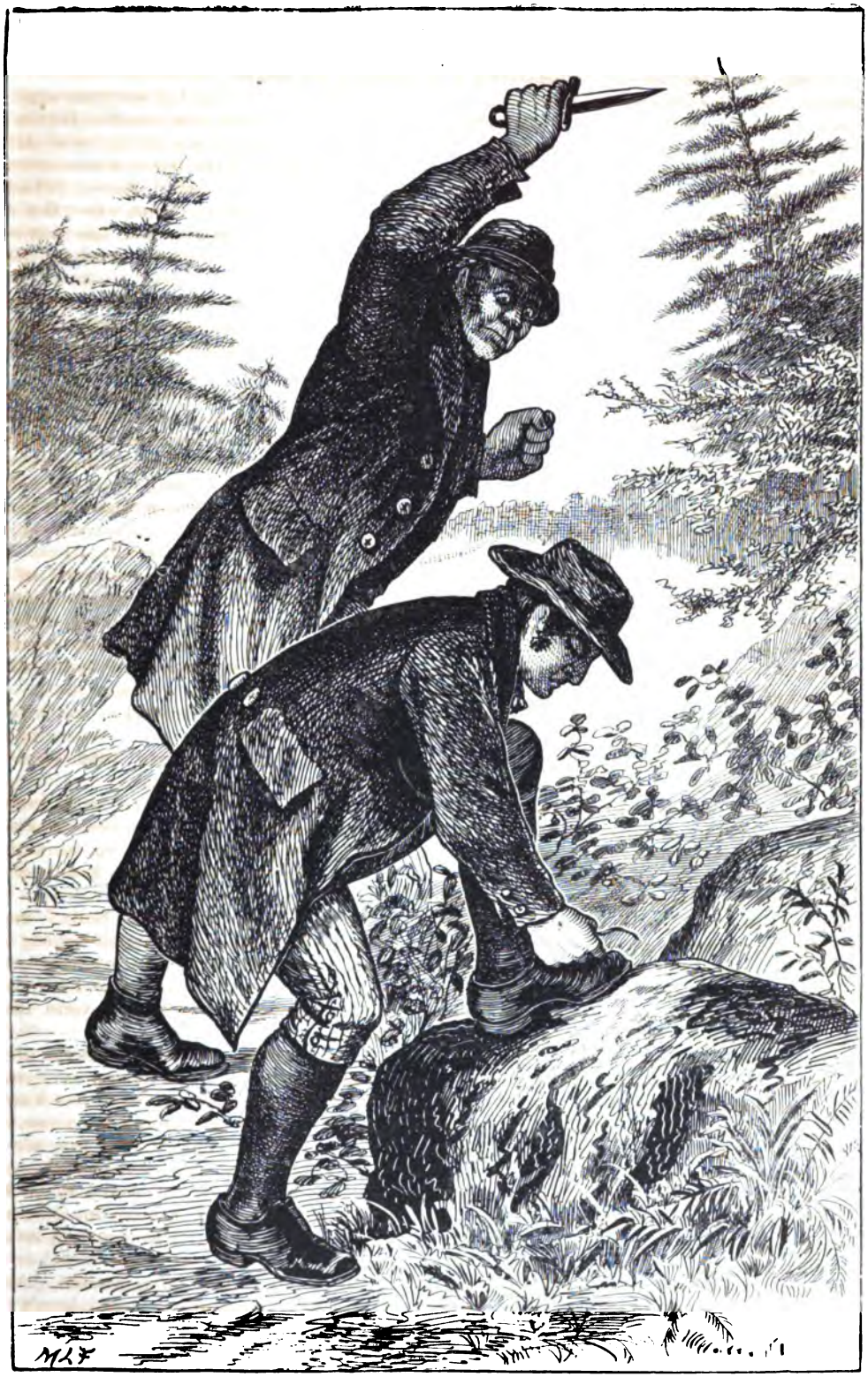
"No, curse the scruple!" said the other.

"I was in the act of covering her eyes and mouth to prevent her from either knowing her old servant or making a noise,—but d—— it, I was bent to *save* her life that night, rather than take it," said Rody.

"I know this friend of yours, Rody, but a short time," observed Nell; "but if he hasn't more spunk in him than yourself, he's not worth his feedin'."

"Show me," said the miscreant, "what's to be done, life or purse—an' here's your sort for both."

"Come, then," said Nell, "by the night above us, we'll thry your mettle."



"HE MADE A STAB AT MY NECK AS I STOOPED TO TIE MY SHOE, THAT HAPPENED TO BE LOOSE."
—*The Dead Boxer*, chap. viii., p. 110.

"Never heed her," observed Nanse; "aunt, you're too wicked an' revengeful."

"Am I?" said the aunt. "I tuck an oath many a year ago, that I'd never die till I'd put sharp sorrow into Lamh Laudher's sowl. I punished him through his daughter, I'll now grind the heart in him through his son."

"An' what do you want to be done?" inquired the red man.

"Come here, an' I'll tell you that," said Nell.

A short conversation took place between them, behind a little partition which divided the kitchen from two small sleeping rooms, containing a single bed each.

"Now," said Nell, addressing the whole party, "let us all be ready to-morrow, while the whole town's preparin' for the fight, to slip away as well disguised as we can, out of the place; by that time *you'll* have your business done, an' your trifle o' money earned;" she directed the last words to the red-haired stranger.

"You keep me out of this secret?" observed Rody.

"It's not worth knowin'," said Nell; "I was only thryin' you, Rody. It's nothing bad. I'm not so cruel as you think. I wouldn't take the wide world an' shed blood wid my own hands. I tried it once on Lamh Laudher More, an' when I thought I killed him hell came into me. No; that I may go *below* if I would!"

"But you would get others to do it, if you could," said Rody.

"I need get nobody to do it for me," said the crone. "I could wither any man, woman, or child, off o' the earth, wid one charm, if I wished."

"Why don't you wither young Lamh Laudher then?" said Rody.

"*If* they fight to-morrow," replied Nell; "mind I say *if* they do—an' I now tell you they won't—but I say *if* they do—you'll see he'll go home in the coffin that's made for him—an' *I* know how that'll happen. Now at eleven we'll meet here if we can to-morrow."

The two men then slunk out, and with great caution proceeded towards different directions of the town, for Nell had recommended them to keep as much asunder as possible, least their grouping together might expose them to notice. Their place of rendezvous was only resorted to on urgent and necessary occasions.

The next morning, a little after the appointed hour, Nell, Rody, and Nanse McCollum, were sitting in deliberation upon their future plans of life, when he of the red hair entered the cabin.

"Well," said Nell, starting up,—"what—what was done? show me?"

The man produced a dagger slightly stained with blood.

"*Damno orrum!*" exclaimed the aged fury, "but you've failed—an' all's lost if he beats the black."

"I did fail," said the miscreant. "Why, woman if that powerful active fellow had got me in his hands, I'd have tasted the full length of the dagger myself. The d——l's narrow escape I had."

"The curse of heaven light on you, for a cowardly dog!" exclaimed Nell, grinding her teeth with disappointment. "You're a faint-hearted villain. Give me the dagger."

"Give me the money," said the man.

"For what? no, consumin' to the penny; you didn't earn it."

"I did," said the fellow, "or at all evints attempted it. Ay, an' I must have it before I lave this house, an' what is more, you must lug out my share of the black's prog."

"You'll get nothing of that," said Rody; "it was Nell here, not you, who took it."

"One hundred of it on the nail, this minnit," said the man, "or I bid you farewell, an' then look to yourselves."

"It's not mine," said Rody; "if Nell shares it, I have no objection."

"I'd give the villain the price of a rope first," she replied.

"Then I am off," said the fellow, "an' you'll curse your conduct."

Nell flew between him and the door, and in his struggle to get out, she grasped at the dagger, but failed in securing it. Rody advanced to separate them, as did Nanse, but the fellow by a strong effort attempted to free himself. The three were now upon him, and would have easily succeeded in preventing his escape had it not occurred to him that by one blow he might secure the whole sum. This was instantly directed at Rody, by a back thrust, for he stood behind him. By the rapid change of their positions, however, the breast of Nell M'Collum received the stab that was designed for another.

A short violent shriek followed, as she staggered back and fell.

"Staunch the blood," she exclaimed, "staunch the blood, an' there may be a chance of life yet."

The man threw the dagger down, and was in the act of rushing out, when the door opened, and a *posse* of constables entered the house. Nell's face became at once ghastly and horror-stricken, for she found that the blood could not be staunched, and that, in fact, eternity was about to open upon her.

"Secure *him!*" said Nell, pointing to her

murderer, "secure him, an' send quick for Lamh Laudher More. God's hand is in what has happened! Ay, *I* raised the blow for *him*, an' God has sent it to my own heart. Send, too," she added, "for the Dead Boxer's wife, an' if you expect heaven, be quick."

On receiving Nell's message the old man, his son, wife, and one or two other friends, immediately hurried to the scene of death, where they arrived a few minutes after the Dead Boxer's wife.

Nell lay in dreadful agony; her face was now a bluish yellow, her eye-brows were bent, and her eyes getting dead and vacant.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "Andy Hart! Andy Hart! it was the black hour you brought me from the right way. I was innocent till I met you, an' well thought of; but what was I ever since? an' what am I now?"

"You never met *me*," said the red-haired stranger, "till within the last fortnight."

"What do you mean, you unfortunate man?" asked Rody.

"Andy Hart is *my* name," said the man, "although I didn't go by it for some years."

"Andy Hart!" said Nell, raising herself with a violent jerk, and screaming, "Andy Hart! Andy Hart! stand over before me. Andy Hart! It is his father's voice. Oh God! Strip his breast there, an' see if there's a blood-mark on the left side."

"I'm beginnin' to fear something dreadful," said the criminal, trembling, and getting as pale as death; "there is—there *is* a blood-mark on the very spot she mentions—see here."

"I would know him to be Andy Hart's son, God rest him!" observed Lamh Laudher More, "any where over the world. Blessed mother of heaven!—down on your knees, you miserable crature, down on your knees for her pardon! You've murdhered your unfortunate mother!"

The man gave one loud and fearful yell, and dashed himself on the floor at his mother's feet, an appalling picture of remorse. The scene, indeed, was a terrible one. He rolled himself about, tore his hair, and displayed every symptom of a man in a paroxysm of madness. But among those present, with the exception of the mother and son, there was not such a picture of distress and sorrow, as the wife of the Dead Boxer. She stooped down to raise the stranger up; "Unhappy man," said she, "look up, I am your sister!"

"No," said Nell, "no—no—no. There's more of my guilt. Lamh Laudher More, stand forrid, you and your wife. You lost a daughter long ago. Open your arms and take her back a blameless woman. She's your child that I robbed you of as *one* punishment; the *other* blow that I intended for you has been struck here. I'm dyin'."

A long cry of joy burst from the mother and daughter, as they rushed into each other's arms. Nature, always strongest in pure minds, even before this *denouement*, had, indeed, rekindled the mysterious flame of her own affection in their hearts. The father pressed her to his bosom, and forgot the terrors of the scene before him, whilst the son embraced her with a secret consciousness that she was, indeed, his long-lost sister.

"We couldn't account," said her parents, "for the way we loved you the day we met you before the magistrate; every word you said, Alice darling, went into our hearts wid delight, an' we could hardly ever think of your voice ever since, that the tears didn't spring to our eyes. But we never suspected, as how could we, that you were our child."

She declared that she felt the same mysterious attachment to them, and to her brother also, from the moment she heard the tones of his voice on the night the robbery was attempted.

"Nor could I," said Lamh Laudher Oge, "account for the manner I loved you."

Their attention was now directed to Nell, who again spoke.

"Nanse, give her back the money I robbed her of. There was more of my villainy, but God fought against me, an'—here I——. You will find it along with her marriage certificate, an' the gospel she had about her neck, when I kidnapped her, all in my pocket. Where's my son? Still, still, bad as I am, an' bad as he is, isn't he my child? Amn't *I* his *mother?* put his hand in mine, and let me die as a mother 'ud wish!"

Never could there be a more striking contrast witnessed than that between the groups then present; nor a more impressive exemplification of the interposition of Providence to reward the virtuous and punish the guilty even in this life.

"Lamh Laudher More," said she, "I once attempted to stab you, only for preventin' your relation from marryin' a woman that you knew Andy Hart had ruined. You disfigured my face in your anger too; that an' your preventing my marriage, an' my character bein' lost, whin it was known what he refused to marry me for, made me swear an oath of vengeance against you an' yours. I may now ax *your* forgiveness, for I neither dare nor will ax God's."

"You have mine—you have all our forgiveness," replied the old man; "but, Nell, ax God's, for it's His you stand most in need of—ax God's!"

Nell, however, appeared to hear him not.

"Is that your hand in mine, avick?" said she, addressing her son.

"It is—it is," said the son. "But, mother, I didn't, as I'm to stand before God, aim the blow at *you*, but at Rody."

"Lamh Laudher!" said she, forgetting herself, "I ax your forgive——."

Her head fell down before she could conclude the sentence, and thus closed the last moments of Nell M'Collum.

After the lapse of a short interval, in which Lamh Laudher's daughter received back her money, the certificate, and the gospel, her brother discovered that Rody was the person who had, through Ellen Neil, communicated to him the secret that assisted him in vanquishing the Dead Boxer, a piece of information which saved him from prosecution. The family now returned home, where they found Meehaul Neil awaiting their arrival, for the purpose of offering his sister's hand and dowry to our hero. This offer, we need scarcely say, was accepted with no sullen spirit. But Lamh Laudher was not so much her inferior in wealth as our readers may suppose. His affectionate sister divided her money between him and her parents, with whom she spent the remainder of her days in peace and tranquility. Our great grandfather remembered the wedding, and from him came down to ourselves, as an authentic tradition, the fact that it was an unrivalled one, but that it would never have taken place were it not for the terrible challenge of the Dead Boxer.

ELLEN DUNCAN.

THERE are some griefs so deep and overwhelming, that even the best exertions of friendship and sympathy are unequal to the task of soothing or dispelling them. Such was the grief of Ellen Duncan, who was silently weeping in her lone cottage on the borders of Clare—a county at that time in a frightful state of anarchy and confusion. Owen Duncan, her husband, at the period about which our tale commences, resided in the cabin where he was born and reared, and to which, as well as a few acres of land adjoining, he had succeeded on the death of his father. They had not been long married, and never were husband and wife more attached. About this time outrages began to be perpetrated; and soon increased fearfully in number. Still Owen and Ellen lived happily, and without fear, as they were too poor for the marauders to dream of getting much booty by robbing; and their religion being known to be "the ould religion ov all ov all," in a warfare that was exclusively one of party, they were more protected than otherwise. Owen never was particularly thrifty; and as his means were small, was generally embarrassed, or rather somewhat pinched in circumstances. Notwithstanding this, however, he was as happy as a king; and according to his unlettered neighbors' artless praise, "there wasn't a readier hand, nor an opener heart in the wide world—that's iv he had id—but he hadn't an' more was the pity." His entire possessions consisted of the ground we have mentioned, most part of which was so rocky as to be entirely useless—a cow, a couple of pigs, and the "the ould cabin," which consisted of four mud walls, covered with thatch, in which was an opening, "to let in the day-light, an' to let out the smoke." In the interior there was no division, or separate apartment, as the one room contained the cooking materials, and all other necessaries, beside their bed, which was placed close to the fire, and, of course, nearly under the opening in the roof. If any one spoke to Owen about the chances of rain coming down to where they slept, his universal answer was, "Shure we're naither shugar nor salt, anyhow; an' a dhrop ov rain, or a thrifle ov wind, was niver known to do any body harm—*barrin'* it brought the typhus; bud God's good, an' ordhers all for the best." Owen had been brought up in this way, and so he could *live* by his labor, he never thought of needless luxuries; and Ellen, seeing him contented, was so herself.

For some months previous to the time of which we write, Owen's affairs had been gradually getting worse and worse; and it was with no pleasing anticipations that he looked forward to his approaching rent day. His uneasiness he studiously kept a secret from his wife, and worked away seemingly with as much cheerfulness as ever, hoping for better days, and *trusting in Providence!* However, when within a week of the time that he expected a call from the agent, he found that with all his industry he had been only able to muster five and twenty shillings, and his rent was above five pounds. So, after a good deal of painful deliberation, he thought of selling his single cow, thinking that by redoubled exertion he might after a while be enabled to repurchase her; forgetting, that before the cow was sold was really the time to make the exertion. A circumstance that greatly damped his ardor in this design was the idea of his wife's not acquiescing in it; and one evening, as they sat together by the light of the wood and turf fire, he thus opened his mind—

"Ellen, asthore, its myself that's sorry I haven't a fine large cabin, and a power o' money, to make you happier an' comfortabler than you are."

"Owen," she interrupted, "don't you know I'm very happy? an' didn't I often tell you, that it was the will of Providence that we shud be poor? So it's sinful to be wishin' for riches."

"Bud, Ellen acushla, it's growin' worse wid us every day; an' I'm afeard the trouble is goin' to come on us. You know how hard the master's new agint is—how he sould Paddy Murphy's cow, an' turned him out, bekase he couldn't pay his rint; an' I'm afeard I'll have to sell '*Black Bess*,' to prevint his doin' the same wid us."

"Well, Owen agra, we mustn't murmur for our disthresses; so do whatever you

think right—times won't be always as they are now."

"Bud, Ellen," said he, "you're forgettin' how you'll miss the dhrop ov milk, an' the bit of fresh butter, fur whin we part wid the poor baste, you won't have even thim to comfort you."

"Indeed, an' iv I do miss them, Owen," she answered, "shure it's no matther, considherin' the bein' turned out ov one's home into the world. Remember the ould sayin' ov, 'out ov two evils always chuse the laste;' an' so, darlint, jist do whatever you think is fur the best."

After this conversation, it was agreed on by both that Owen should set out the next day but one for the town, to try and dispose of the "cow, the crathur;" and although poverty had begun to grind them a little, still they had enough to eat, and slept tranquilly. However, it so happened, that the very morning on which he had appointed to set out, "*Black Bess*" was seized for a long arrear of a tax that had not been either asked or paid there for some time, and driven off, with many others belonging to his neighbors, to be sold. Now you must know, good reader, that there is a feeling interwoven, as it were, in the Irish nature, that will doggedly resist anything that it conceives in the slightest or most remote degree oppressive or unjust; and that feeling then completely usurped all others in Owen's mind. He went amongst his friends, and they condoled with one another about their grievances; there was many a promise exchanged, that they would stand by each other in their future resistance to what they considered an unlawful impost. When the rent-day came, by disposing of his two pigs, and by borrowing a little, he was enabled to pay the full amount, and thus protract for some time the fear "ov bein' turned out on the world."

Some days after the whole country was in a tumult—Daly, "the procthor," was found murdered in the centre of the high road; and there was no clue perceptible, by which the perpetrators of the crime could be discovered. The very day before, Owen had borrowed the game-keeper's gun, to go, as he said, to a wild, mountainous part of the country to shoot hares; and from this circumstance, and his not having returned the day after, a strong feeling of suspicion against him was in the minds of most. In fact, on the very evening that we have represented Ellen sitting in tears, the police had come to the cabin in search of him; and their report to the magistrate was, that he had absconded. His wife was in a miserable state of mind, and her whole soul was tortured with conflicting emotions. Owen's long absence, as well as his borrowing the gun, seemed to bespeak his guilt; and yet, when she recollected the gentleness of his manner, and his hitherto blameless life, she could not deem him so, no matter how circumstances seemed against him. But then, the harrowing idea that it *might be*, came in to blast these newly formed hopes, and her state of suspense was one of deep and acute misery.

She was sitting, as we have said, alone; the fire, that had consisted of two or three sods of turf heaped upon the floor, had almost entirely gone out; the stools and *bosses* were tossed negligently here and there; and the appearance of the entire apartment was quite different from its usual neat and tidy trim. Her head was bent a little, and her hands were clasped tightly around her knees, while her body was swaying to and fro, as if the agitation of her mind would not allow of its repose. Her eyes were dry, but red from former weeping; and she was occasionally muttering, "No, he can't be guilty"—"Owen commit a murdher!—It must be an untruth!" and such like expressions. Gradually, as she thus thought aloud, her motions became more rapid, and her cheeks were no longer dry, while the light that entered through the open door becoming suddenly shaded, she turned round, and raised her tearful eyes to question the intruder. She sprang eagerly forward, and hung on his neck, (for it was Owen himself,) while she joyfully exclaimed—

"Oh, heaven be praised, yer come back at last, to give the lie to all their reports, an' to prove yer innocence."

"Ellen, my darlint," he answered, "I knew you'd be glad to get me back," and he kissed again and again her burning lips; "but what do you mane, acushla?—What reports do you spake ov, an' ov what am I accused?"

"Oh, thin, Owen, I'm glad you didn't even hear ov id; an' the poliss here searchin' the house to make you pres'ner. Shure, avick, Bill Daly, the procthor, that sazed poor *Black Bess*, was murdhered the very mornin' you wint to shoot the hares; an' on account ov yer borryin' the gun, an' threatenin' him the day ov the sale, they said it was you that done id; but I gev thim all the lie, fur I knew you wor innocent. Now, Owen, ahagur, you look tired, sit down, an' I'll get you somethin' to ate. Och, bud I'm glad that yer returned safe!"

The overjoyed wife soon heaped fresh turf on the fire, and partly blowing, partly fanning it into a flame, hung a large iron pot over it, from a hook firmly fixed in the wall. While these preparations were going forward, Owen laid aside his rough outside coat, and

going to the door, looked out, as if in irresolution.

"Ellen," at length said he, turning suddenly round, "I'm thinkin' that I'd bether go to the poliss barrack an' surrindher—or rather, see what they have to say agin me; as I'm an innocent man, I've no dhread; an' if I wait till they come an' take me, it'll look as iv I was afeard."

"Thrue for-you, agra," she answered; "bud it's time enough yit a bit—no one knows ov yer bein' here. You look slaved, an' had bether rest yerself, an' ate a pratee or two. I have no milk ov my own to offer you *now*, but I'll go an' thry an' get a dhrop from a neighbor."

When Ellen returned with a little wooden noggin full, her husband was sitting warming his hands over the fire; and it was then she recollected that he had not brought back the gun with him; besides, when she cast a glance at his clothes, they were all soiled with mud and clay, and torn in many places. But these circumstances did not for a moment operate in her mind against him, for she knew from the very manner of his first question, and the innocence of his exclamation, that the accusations and suspicions were all false. Even though he had not attempted to explain the cause of his protracted absence, she felt conscious that it was not guilt, and forbore to ask any question about it. It was he first opened the subject, as they sat together over their frugal meal.

"Ellen," said he, "sence I saw you last, I wint through a dale ov hardship; an' I little thought, on my return, that I'd be accused ov so black a crime."

"Och, shure enough, Owen darlint; but I hope it 'ill be all for the best. I little thought I'd see the day that you'd be suspected ov murdher."

"Well, Ellen aroon, all's in it is, it can't be helped. Bud as I was sayin'—whin I left this, I cut acrass by Sheemus Doyle's, an' so up into the mountain, where I knew the hares were coorsin' about in plenty. I shot two or three ov thim; an' as night began to fall, I was thinkin' ov comin' home, whin I heerd the barkin' ov a dog a little farther up, in the wild part, where I never ventured afore. I dunna what prompted me to folly id; bud, any how, I did, an' wint on farther an' farther. Well, Ellen agra, I at last come to a deep valley, full up a'most of furze an' brambles, an' I seen a black thing runnin' down the edge ov id. It was so far off, I thought it was a hare, an' so I lets fly, an' it rowled over an' over. Whin I dhrew near, what was it bud a purty black spaniel; an' you may be shure I was sorry for shootin' it, an' makin' such a mistake. I lays down the gun, an' takes id in my arms, an' the poor crathur licked the hand that shot id. Thin suddenly there comes up three sthrange min, an' sazin' me as if I wor a child, they carrid me down wid them, cursin' an' abusin' me all the way. As they made me take a solemn oath not to revale what I saw there, I can't tell you any more: but they thrated me badly, an' it was only yestherday I escaped."

"Well, Owen, ahagur, we ought to be thankful that you're back here safe; bud do you think the magisthrate will be satisfied with this story—they are always anxious to do justice, but they must be satisfied."

"In throth, they are, machree: but shure I'll sware to id; an', besides, you know, the raal murdherer may be discovered—for God never lets it, ov all other crimes, go athout punishment. An' now I'll just go to the barracks at onst, an' be out ov suspinse."

Ere Duncan had concluded his sentence, the tramp of feet was heard outside, and in a few seconds the cabin was full of armed men, who came to take him prisoner. He had been seen entering his cabin; and they immediately, i. e., as soon as they could muster a party, set out to make him captive. As he was known to most of them, and did not make the slightest attempt at resistance, they treated him gently, but bound his hands firmly behind his back, and took every necessary precaution. Though Ellen, while it seemed at a distance, had conversed calmly about his surrender, she was violently agitated at the appearance of the armed force. She clung to her husband's knees, and refused to part with him, wildly screaming, "He's innocent! My husband's innocent!" and when all was prepared, she walked by his side to the magistrate's house, (a distance of three miles,) her choking sobs and burning tears attesting the violence of her uncontrolled feelings. A short examination was gone through there; and the circumstantial evidence that was adduced made the case look very serious. One man positively swore, that he had seen Duncan pass by in the morning, in the direction where the body was found, and that he was armed with a gun. Another, that in about an hour afterwards he had heard a shot, but supposed it was some person coursing, and that the report was just where the body was found, and where Owen had been seen proceeding to. His only cow having been seized by Daly, a threat that he was heard uttering, and his absence from home, was duly commented on; and finally, he was committed to prison to abide his trial at the Ennis Assizes. While all this was going forward, Ellen's

emotions were most agonizing. She stared wildly at the magistrate and the two witnesses; and as the evidence was proceeded with, she sometimes hastily put back her hair, as if she thought she was under the influence of a dream. But when his final committal was made out, and her mind glanced rapidly at the concurrent testimony, and the danger of Owen, she rushed forward, and flinging her arms round him, wildly exclaimed—

"They shan't part us—they shan't tear us asunder! No, no, Owen, I will go wid you to preson! Oh, is id come to this wid us? —You to be dhragged from home, accused of murdher—and I—I—Father of marcies, keep me in my sinses—I'm goin' mad—wild, wild mad!"

"Ellen!" said Owen, gently unwinding her arms, and kissing her forehead, while a scalding tear fell from his eye on her cheek —"Ellen, asthore machree! don't be overcome. There's a good girl, dhry yer eyes. That God that knows I'm guiltless, 'ill bring me safe through all. May his blessin' be on you, my poor colleen, till we meet agin! You know you can come an' see me. Heaven purtect you, Ellen, alanna!—Heaven purtect you!".

When he was finally removed, she seemed to lose all power, and but for the arm of a bystander would have fallen to the ground. It was not without assistance that she was at length enabled to reach her cabin.

It is strange how man's feelings and powers are swayed by outward circumstances, and how his pride and strength may be entirely overcome by disheartening appearances! So it was with Owen: although constantly visited in prison by his faithful wife —although conscious of his own innocence —and although daily receiving assurances of hope from a numerous circle of friends—yet still his spirit drooped; the gloom of imprisonment, the idea of danger, the ignominy of public execution and all the horrors of innocent conviction, gradually wore away his mental strength; and when the assize time approached, he was but a thin shadow of the former bluff, healthy Owen Duncan. In so short a time as this, can care and harrowing thought exercise its influence on the human frame!

Never was there a finer or more heavenly morning than that which ushered in the day of trial. The court-house was crowded to suffocation, the mob outside fearfully numerous, and never before, perhaps, was Ennis in such a state of feverish excitement. Daly's murder was as nought in the minds of all, in comparison with Duncan's accusation. Alas! the former was an occurrence of too frequent repetition, to be *very much* thought of; but the latter—namely, Owen's being suspected —was a subject of the extremest wonder. His former high character—his sobriety—his quietness, and his being a native of the town, in some measure accounted for this latter feeling; and there was an inward conviction in most men's minds, that he was guiltless of the crime for which he was accused. Although the court-house was crowded, yet when the prisoner was called to the bar, a pin could be heard to drop in any part of the place. There was a single female figure leaning on the arm of an aged and silver-haired, though hale and healthy countryman, within a few feet of the dock; and as the prisoner advanced, and laying his hand on the iron railing, confronted the judges and the court, she slowly raised the hood of the cloak, in which she was completely muffled, and gazed long and earnestly on his face. There was in that wistful look, a fear—a hope—an undying tenderness; and when his eye met hers, there was a proud, yet soft and warm expression in its glance, that re-assured her sinking heart. As she looked round on the court, and the many strange faces, and all the striking paraphernalia of justice, a slight shudder crept silently over her frame, and she clung closer to her companion, as if to ask for all the protection he could afford. It was Ellen and her father who came, the former summoned as a witness, and the latter to accompany and support the daughter of his aged heart.

Duncan was arraigned: and on being asked the usual question of "guilty, or not guilty?" he answered in a clear, calm voice, "Not guilty, my Lord!" and the trial proceeded. The same evidence that was given at the magistrate's house was a second time repeated; and, evidently, its train of circumstances made a deep impression on the court. While the first part of the examination was going forward, Ellen remained as motionless as a statue, scarcely daring to move or breathe; but when the depositions went more and more against Owen, her respirations became quick, short, and gaspish; and when the crier desired her to get up on the table, it was with difficulty that she obeyed him. When seated, she gazed timidly round on the crowd of counsellors and the judges, as though to bespeak their sympathy; but then, not meeting a single glance from which to glean even the shadow of hope, she covered her face with her hands. A moment or two elapsed, and she grew more assured, and the counsel for the Crown proceeded with the examination.

"Ellen Duncan, is not that your name?" was the first question.

"It is, Sir," she shrinkingly answered, without raising her eyes.

"Do you know the prisoner at the bar?"

"Do I know the pres'ner at the bar?" she reiterated; "do I know Owen Duncan? Shure, isn't he my husband?"

"Do you recollect the night of the twenty-first of September?"

"I do, Sir."

"Can you swear to whether your husband was at home on that night or not?"

Her voice faltered a little as she answered in the negative; and on the presiding judge repeating the question, with the addition of, "Did he return at all next day?" it seemed as if she first thought that her answers might criminate him still farther, and clasping her hands convulsively together, and raising her face to the bench, while the scalding tears chased each other down her sunken cheek, she passionately exclaimed—

"Oh, for the love of heaven, don't ask me any thing that 'ill be worse for *him!* Don't, counsellor jewel, don't!—don't ask me to swear any thing that 'ill do *him* harm; for I can't know what I'm sayin' now, as the heart within me is growin' wake."

After a few cheering expressions from the bench, who evidently were much moved by her simply energetic language and action, she was asked whether she could tell the Court where her husband spent that and the following nights; and with all the eagerness that an instantaneously formed idea of serving him could give, she answered—

"Oh, yis! yis! my Lord, I can. He was in the mountains shootin' wid Phil Doran's gun, an' he was sazed by some men, that made him stop wid thim, an' take an oath not to revale who they wor, an' they thrated him badly; so afther three days he made his escape, and come home to the cabin, whin he was taken by the poliss."

"One word more, an' you may go down —What was done with that gun?"

The judge's hard and unmoved tone of voice seemed to bring misgiving to her mind, and she trembled from head to foot as she falteringly answered—

"The wild boys of the mountain kep' it, my Lord, an' so he couldn't bring id home wid him. But, indeed, my Lord, indeed he's innocent.—I'll swear he never done it! Fur, oh! iv you knew the tindherness ov his heart—he that niver hurt a fly! Don't be hard on him for the love ov mercy, an' I'll pray for you night an' day."

This was the last question she was asked, and having left the table, and regained her former position by her father's side, she listened with moveless, motionless intensity to the judge's "charge." He recapitulated the evidence—dwelt on the strong circumstances that seemed to bespeak his guilt—spoke of the mournful increase of crime—of laws, and life, and property being at stake—and finally closed his address with a sentence expressive of the extreme improbability of the prisoner's defence; for he, on being asked if he had any thing further to say, replied in the negative, only asserting, in the most solemn manner, his innocence of the charge.

The jury retired, and Ellen's hard, short breathings, alone told that she existed. Her head was thrown back, her lips apart, and slightly quivering, and her eyes fixedly gazing on the empty box, with an anxious and wild stare of hope and suspense. Owen's face was very pale, and his lips livid—there was the slightest perceptible emotion about the muscles of his mouth, but his eye quailed not, and his broad brow had the impress of an unquenched spirit as firmly fixed as ever on its marble front. A quarter of an hour elapsed, and still the same agonizing suspense —another, and the jury returned not—five minutes, and they re-entered. Ellen's heart beat as if it would burst her bosom; and Owen's pale cheek became a little more flushed, and his eye full of anxiety. The foreman in a measured, feelingless tone pronounced the word "Guilty!" and a thrill of horror passed through the entire court, while that sickness which agonizes the very depths of the soul convulsed Owen's face with a momentary spasm, and he faltered "God's will be done." The judge slowly drew on the black cap, and still Ellen moved not—it seemed as if the very blood within her veins was frozen, and that her life's pulses no more could execute their functions. No man, however brave or hardened, can view the near approach of certain death, and be unmoved; and as that old man, in tremulous tones, uttered the dread fiat of his fate, Owen's eyes seemed actually to sink within his head—the veins of his brow swelled and grew black, and his hands grasped the iron rail that surrounded the dock, as though he would force his fingers through it. When all was over, and the fearful cap drawn off, Ellen seemed only then to awake to consciousness. Her eyes slowly opened to their fullest extent—their expression of despair was absolutely frightful—a low, gurgling, half-choking sob forced itself from between her lips, and ere a hand could be outstretched to save her, she fell, as if quickly dashed to the ground by no mortal power—her piercing shriek of agony ringing through the court-house, with a fearful, prolonged cadence.

Evening approached, and the busy crowd of idlers had passed away, some to brood over what they had seen, and others to for-

get, in the bustle of life, that there were woes and miseries in the hearts of their fellow-beings. Owen was remanded to prison, as his execution was not to take place till the commission was over, thus giving him more than a week to prepare for that final doom. The light that struggled through the bars of his cell rested fully on the stooping figure of his wife, as she bent over the rude bed on which he lay; and her hot tears fell fast down her cheeks, as she thought how soon they were doomed to part for ever. Hope was not, however, entirely dead within her, for the jury had strongly recommended him to mercy; and ignorant as she was of forms and ceremonies—helpless as a lone woman in misfortune always is—she had determined on going to Dublin, to kneel at the feet of the Lord Lieutenant—then the proud and whimsical Duke of ——, and there to solicit his pardon. Having hesitated for some time as to the manner in which she should break it to him, and ask his advice, she thus began—

"Owen, dear Owen! do you know what I've been thinkin' ov, an' where I've been thinkin' ov goin'?"

There was no answer returned for some time, and on looking at him more earnestly, she was astonished to find that he had sank into a profound slumber. "Guilt," thought she, "is not there!" and her resolution was taken instantly—she would not wake him—she would not let him know her purpose—and if she succeeded, her eyes flashed through her tears at the anticipation of his rapturous surprise. Stooping lower, she gently pressed her lips to his; and kneeling beside his bed, poured forth a short but fervent prayer to HIM in whom alone we can put our trust—"In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind"—"Who preserveth not the life of the wicked, but giveth right to the poor." There was something exceedingly and touchingly beautiful in the attitude of that young wife—her hands clasped, her lips moving with her prayer, like rose-leaves with the evening breeze, and her upturned face, with its holy and deep religious expression. Having concluded her fervent petition, she noiselessly arose, and giving her sleeping husband one long and lingering look of affection, that death could not estrange, she silently glided from the cell.

On the third night from the events which we have narrated, a poor woman was observed wending her toilsome way through the streets of the metropolis. Her appearance bespoke fatigue and long travel; and as she neared the Upper Castle gate, she had to lean against the railing for support. The lamps were lighted, carriages rolling to and fro, and all the buzz of life was ringing in her ears; but, oh! from the expression of pain and suffering in her face, and the shrinking with which she surveyed the sentinels pacing up and down, it was evident that her mind but little accorded with the scenes by which she was surrounded. She slowly and fearfully entered the wide court-yard—a flood of light was streaming from the windows of the vice-regal dwelling, and a crowd of idlers stood around about, viewing the entrance of the visitors, for it appeared as if there were a revel of some kind going on. Ellen's heart sank within her, as she heard the carriages rolling and dashing across the pavement, for she felt that amid the bustle of company and splendor her poor appeal might be entirely unnoticed. As she waited, she saw several of the persons assembled thrust rudely back by the soldiers that were on guard, and when she advanced a step or two for the purpose of entering, a brute in human shaped pushed her with a blow of the end of his musket back against the pillar. He was about to repeat his violence, when the poor creature fell on her knees before him and screamed—

"Sojer darlin', don't stop me! I'm only goin' in to plade fur my husband's life, an' shure you wont prevent me? I've traveled many a wairy mile to get here in time; an', oh! fur marcy's sake let me pass."

At this moment the carriage of the eccentric and beautiful Lady ——, one of the wildest, strangest, and best-hearted females of the Irish Court, set down its lovely burden. She had seen the whole transaction of the sentinel, and heard Ellen's pathetic appeal, and her heart was instantly moved in her favor, for the example of fashion had not yet frozen up its finer feelings. Partly through the workings of a softened heart, and partly to make what was then all the rage, a scene or sensation, she resolved instantly to get her admitted to the presence of the Duke—nay, to present her herself. She was well known to be a favorite, and whatever whim of hers took place, no matter how extravagant, was sure to meet his hearty concurrence. She desired Ellen to rise and follow her; and the poor creature's eyes streamed with tears as she invoked a fervent blessing on the head of her lovely protectress. While passing up the grand staircase, amid the wondering gaze and suppressed titter of many a pampered menial, she instructed her how to proceed; and having received a hasty account of all, and desired her not to be faint-hearted, she turned to the simpering master of ceremonies to tell him of her "dear delightful freak:" there was a

HAVING CONCLUDED HER FERVENT PETITION, SHE NOISELESSLY AROSE, AND GIVING HER SLEEPING HUSBAND ONE LONG AND LINGERING LOOK OF AFFECTION, THAT DEATH COULD NOT ESTRANGE, SHE SILENTLY GLIDED FROM THE CELL.—*Ellen Duncan*, p 190

glad smile on her lip, and a glowing crimson on her cheek, but still there was a glistening moisture in her fine eyes, that told of soft and womanish feeling.

The Duke was sitting on a chair of crimson velvet; a cushion of the same costly material supported his feet; and he was looking with an appearance of apathy and *ennui* on the splendid group around him. The glitter of the lights, the lustre of the jewels, and the graceful waving of the many-colored plumes, gave every thing a courtly, sumptuous appearance, and the air was heavy with odors, the fragrant offering of many a costly exotic. Suddenly every eye was turned on the door with wonder and astonishment, and every voice was hushed as Lady —— entered, her cheeks blushing from excitement, and her eye bright with anticipated triumph. She led the poor and humbly clad Ellen by the hand, who dared not look up, but with her gaze riveted on the splendid carpet, was brought like an automaton to the feet of the Duke, where she mechanically knelt down.

"Will yer Excillincy be plazed," began Lady ——, playfully mimicking the brogue, "to hear this poor crathur's complaint. Her husband has been condimned to die for a murdher he didn't commit by no manner ov manes, as the sayin' is; an' as there was a sthrong recommindation to marcy, if you'll grant him a reprieve, you'll have all our prayers, and (in an under tone) your Excillincy knows you want thim?"

The Duke seemed a little bewildered, as if he could not make out what it meant, and the glittering crowd now surrounded the group; when Ellen, who had ventured to look timidly up, conceived that the Duke hesitated about the pardon, (poor creature! she little knew that he had not even heard of Owen's trial,) eagerly grasped the drapery of his chair, and while the big tears rolled from beneath her eyelids, exclaimed—

"Oh! may the great and just Providence, that sees the workin' ov all our hearts, pour a blessin' on yer Lordship's head—may *His* holy grace be wid you for iver an' iver, an' do listen to my prayers! My husband is innocent—an' oh! as you hope for marcy at the last day, be marciful now to *him*."

"Lady ——," said the Duke, "what is the meaning of all this—will you explain?"

"Your Excellency," answered she, in the natural sweet pathos of her tones, "it is a poor man who has been condemned to die on circumstantial evidence. He has been strongly recommended to mercy, and this weeping female is his wife. I found her outside praying for admission, and have brought her hither. She has traveled mostly on foot upwards of ninety miles to ask a pardon; and I trust you will not refuse a *reprieve*, till your Grace has time to inquire into the circumstance. 'This is the head and front of my offending.'"

"May heaven bless yer Ladyship," burst from the depths of Ellen's grateful heart, "fur befriendin' thim that had no support but his gracious marcy."

Lady ——'s suit was eagerly seconded by many a fair creature, who thronged around; and the Duke smiled, as he answered,

"Well, well! one could not refuse so many fair beseechers, so we will order him to be *reprieved*. And there, now, let the poor woman be removed."

Ellen's heart was light, and her eye was glad, and her very inmost soul was thankful to the Omnipotent, as she that night rested for a few hours, ere she set out on her return; and Lady ——, as she pressed her costly pillow, felt a fuller sense of happiness in being useful to her fellow-creature than ever she experienced before. Oh! that all the wealthy and in power were incited by similar feelings.

The remainder of our simple tale is soon told. The reprieve arrived—the sentence was changed to banishment—and the very day appointed for Owen's death was that of his wife's successful return. One week previous to the embarkation of those sentenced to transportation, a man was to be executed for sheep-stealing. On the drop he confessed his guilt, and that he, and not Duncan, was the murderer of Daly. Owen was immediately released, and a subscription raised for him, with which, as well as with a weighty purse presented to Ellen by Lady ——, he took a comfortable farm, and rebought "*Black Bess*."

THE PROCTOR'S DAUGHTER.

"HURROO! at id agin. Success, Briney. Ha! take that, you ould dust. Will you bewitch our cattle now, Nanny? Whoo—ha, ha, ha!—at id agin, boys—that's your sort."

Such were a few of the explosives of mingled fun and devilment that proceeded from a group of ragged urchins, who were busily employed in pelting with hard mud, sods and other missiles, an old and decrepit woman, whose gray hair and infirmities ought to have been her protection, but whose reputation as an evil disposed witch proved quite the contrary. Nanny, for such was her name, was leaning, or rather sitting, against a bank at the road side, shaking occasionally her crutch at her tormentors, and muttering a heavy curse as missile after missile fell thickly around her. The shouts of laughter proceeding from the annoying children, as she tried in vain to rise, and impotently threatened, made her imprecations come doubly bitter; but her eye was never wet, nor did she once even by a look appeal to their pity. Her figure was bent with age, and her shaking hands brown and fleshless—her hair was gray and wiry, and escaped from beneath her cap, in short, thin, tangled masses—her eyes were dark and deep set, and her lips and mouth had fallen in as her teeth had gradually decayed. She was clad in a russet gown, much the worse for the wear, and a scarlet cloak, or rather a cloak that had once been scarlet, but was now completely faded from its original color. It had been broken here and there, but was pieced with different colored cloths, so as to appear a motley and strange garment; and her bony feet were bare and unprotected. Nanny, from different circumstances, was unanimously elected the witch or *bugbear* of the village; and though the brats were *then* so busy annoying her, at night, or in a lonesome place, they would fly like lightning even at her approach; and some of them actually trembled while shouting, though they did not like to exhibit their fear to their companions. In the first place, she lived completely alone in a hovel on the mountain side, where, save heath, rock, and fern, there was not a single thing on which the eye could rest; then, no one knew from whence she came, and lights were frequently seen shining through her unglazed windows at hours when spirits were supposed to be abroad; besides, more than once a group of dark figures had been observed standing at twilight near her door, and were always set down as ministering demons, awaiting the pleasure of their mistress. Whenever a cow ceased giving milk—whenever a lamb or pig got any disease and died—it was unanimously attributed to the spite and venom of "Nanny the witch;" in fact, no human being could be viewed with more mingled feelings of fear and hate than she was by all the inhabitants of the village. The boys still continued their unfeeling attack; and she now was silent and gloomy, and did not menace nor even mutter a curse, but her firmness had not left her, for her brow was darkly bent, and her small black eyes emitted a flash of wild though concentrated anger and revenge. Nor did those who passed from time to time, by word or gesture discourage the young urchins from their attack; sometimes they even stood looking complacently on, wondering at the reckless courage of the boys, as *they* would not for worlds dare to rise a hand against one so very powerful. Suddenly a louder whoop than any they had yet given, told that they had just invented some new mode of annoyance, and a short, hard-featured, red-headed boy, whom they called Briney, ran whooping and hallooing towards them, bearing a large hairy cap, which he triumphantly declared was full of rotten eggs—those delicious affairs which smash so delightfully off an unprotected face, and which used to be in great demand when pillories were in fashion.

"I must have first shot!" roared Briney, as he placed his burden down in the midst, and seized one of the eggs it contained.

"Sorra a bit, Briney!" screamed another, striding before him—"I've a betther aim nor you."

"You a betther aim!" scornfully retorted he; "thry id:" and his hand was upraised in the act of pelting, but was as suddenly stopped and withheld, as a pretty, tiny, fair-haired child, tripped forward from an opposite stile; and perceiving what was going on, ran quickly to the old woman, and laying

down a pitcher that she bore, stood before her, facing the crowd of boys, her mild, soft blue eye flashing displeasure, and her cheeks flushed with a deep pink suffusion.

"Shame! oh, for shame!" were the first exclamations that escaped her, and her sweet voice trembled with anger.

"Bedad, it's purty Minny herself, sure enough!" muttered one urchin to another, as they hesitated what to do, each evidently unwilling to encounter the reproaches they were sure of receiving; and one or two scampered off the instant she spoke.

Then turning round to the old woman, and perceiving that her lips looked dry and parched, she ran to the pitcher, and lifting it to her mouth with much softness and compassion, exclaimed,

"Poor Nanny, you look dhry, an' here's some wather. Take a little sup, an' it 'ill revive you! Oh; if I wor here a little bit sooner."

Nanny raised her eyes to thank her, and did as she requested; and it was indeed a touching thing to see that child in all the budding beauty of infancy, attending so anxiously on the withered female, whose name was seldom pronounced without dread or malediction. The urchins looked on for some time with open mouths and staring eyes; and then, headed by Briney, giving a farewell shout, to show they were not entirely disconcerted, bravely took to their heels.

"May the blessins ov the poor and persecuted folly on yer path, my purty child!" gratefully exclaimed the old woman, as her eyes rested on the cherub face and infantine figure of her protectress, and they now were dewy and wet with tears.

"Shall I help you to rise, Nanny?" asked she, her little heart dancing with pleasure at hearing the fervent wish: "iv you like to go home, an' you think me sthrong enough, I'll help you on!"

"From my heart I thank you, my purty golden haired child," said the old woman, as with her assistance she at length stood up; "bud you seem to know who I am, and I wondher yer not afeard ov me. Minny, I think they called you—who is the happy father ov my little darlin'?"

"I'm Minny Whelan," gently answered the little girl; upon which Nanny shrunk hastily back, and a fearful change overspread her features.

"*Minny Whelan!* — *you* the proctor's daughter? Those smiling lips—those tinder, soft eyes—that rich yellow hair—an' that warm an' feelin' heart, Minny Whelan's. Oh, it can't, it mustn't be—I won't believé id!"

The little girl laughed, although wonder lurked in her eye, and repeated innocently,

"Sure enough, I am the procthor's daughter: bud you don't hate me for id—do you?"

"Come close to me, child, till I look upon you," said Nanny, in a cold and altered tone of voice; and then, as Minny fearlessly advanced, she laid her aged hands on her head, and pushing back the profusion of her curling hair, looked long and anxiously on her. A hot tear fell upon the child's forehead as she withdrew her hand; and in a broken voice the old woman exclaimed,

"You are—you are indeed his child; bud have naither his black look, nor his hard an' baneful heart—so—so—I cannot hate you! For years I've never met with kindness, till you wor kind. Minny, heaven 'ill reward you for id; an' may its blessin' be wid you, is the prayer ov your father's bittherest foe!"

At this the child hesitated for an instant, as if she did not comprehend the latter part of Nanny's sentence; and then innocently taking her hand, she looked up to her face and said—

"Bud maybe yer too tired to go home now all the ways, Nanny, so iv you'll come home wid me, I'm sure my father won't be angry, an' will"——

"Go home wid *you!*" wildly reiterated the old woman, her eyes blazing so fearfully, that the child shrunk instinctively back—"crass *your* father's flure!—inther the man's house who sint my son—my only son!—my heart's blood!—from his native land, wid disgrace upon his name, and the heavy hand ov power crushin' him to the earth! Never!—these eyes, that once could laugh wid happiness, will burn in their sockets first, and this withered heart, once so warm and joyful, will burst afore I ever think ov id!"

"Nanny," tremblingly said Minny, "you spake so wild you make me afeard—I hope I haven't done anything to vex you!"

"*You!* Oh! no, no—*you* force me to love you! I couldn't hate *you*, although yer father—bud no matther. Minny, good bye—may the Almighty guard you."

The day passed away as Summer days are wont, in softness and languor, and the sun descended in gold and crimson, leaving a bright halo in the west to mark his resting place. Night came on serene and still, and the quiet moon ascended her heavenly throne, while the refreshing dews fell upon the flowers, whose leaves opened to receive them, parched as they were with the burning lustre of the mid-day sun. Midnight had already passed; and all was as silent as if no living or created thing existed upon the earth to mar its splendid beauty with the wild indulgence of its fiercer passions. A strong light was gleaming from the interior of Nanny's

"SHAME! OH, SHAME!" WAS THE FIRST EXCLAMATION THAT ESCAPED HER, AND HER SWEET VOICE TREMBLED WITH ANGER.—*The Proctor's Daughter*, p. 124.

cabin, which we have already said was situated on the mountain side; and the noisy sounds of revelry were heard proceeding from within. Could any of the superstitious have summoned courage to approach sufficiently near, and listen for a moment, the idea of spirits would soon be dissipated in the bluff, hoarse voices which were laughing and grumbling, and singing, sometimes alternately, and sometimes all together. But we had better introduce the reader to the interior, and then he will be a better judge of the nature of the orgies carried on.

The cabin consisted of but one small apartment, in the centre of which blazed a huge fire (summer though it was) of dried peat. The smoke sought egress where it might, but still left a sufficient canopy over the heads of the occupants, as completely to hide the dingy and charred rafters, and did not seem in the slightest degree to annoy the optical powers of any one, so accustomed where they to this kind of atmosphere. Round this fire about ten were seated or squatted down, and were all at the time busily employed in some noisy and apparently angry disputation. However, this did not prevent the bottle from being freely passed amongst them; and so cordial were they in embracing it, that Nanny, who sat a little apart, was often called on to replenish it with mountain-dew. On a table or dresser that stood by the wall, were three or four large pistols, besides an old sword or two, and a few rusted bayonets: piled against it were two large muskets, evidently kept with more care than the rest of the arms, for they were brightly polished, and looked even new. A couple of powder-horns, a tin box containing shot and bullets, and a large iron mallet, used in breaking open doors, completed the array, which could leave no doubt as to the men who occupied the cabin.

"Come, Nanny acushla, give us another dhrop of that you gev us last," exclaimed one, whose rolling eyes gave token of approaching intoxication; "you're not used to be sparin', an' considherin' the way you get id, needn't be so—eh? Dick, what do you say to another drink?"

"Game to the last," answered the man addressed—"never refuse id."

"Why, Nanny," observed a low but muscularly formed man, who seemed from his manner to exercise some slight command amongst his associates, "what's the matther wid you to-night? Sure we're goin' to do what you've long been axin' us, an' what you first gev us lave to meet here for—an' by doin' so we've got the fame of bein' not quite right. The villain of a procthor that sint poor Bob off afore he could look about him, 'ill resave his pay to-night, anyhow. What say you, boys?"

"No doubt ov it!—All right!—Whoo! sartinly!" they grumbled and shouted in reply; and then, the whiskey having been brought, the health of Nanny's absent son, and their companion, was loudly proposed and drank.

"I say, Dick," hiccupped the first speaker, who now began to wax drunk, "what is your op—op—opinion should we do to ould Whelan? You know, I'm (hiccup) not nathe rally crule, bud suppose (hiccup) we jist cut the ears off the baste, an' (hiccup) lave him hard ov hearin' for the rest ov his life!"

"I'm not the man to disagree wid a rasonable iday," ironically answered Dick.

"What do you say to that, my ould (hiccup) woman?" again asked he, addressing Nanny, who had drawn near to listen; "suppose we sarve him that-a-way, will you be (hiccup) satisfied; or maybe you'd sooner we'd prevint his bein' annoyed wid a cough by (hiccup) cuttin' his informin' throat!"

While he spoke, an indescribable expression lighted up the old woman's eye, and she stood a moment, as if a struggle was going on between long-brooded-over revenge and some newly awakened sympathy. The rest of the men were busy with other schemes, and did not even hear the last conversation, for they had before agreed to pay Whelan a visit that night, and Nanny had eagerly entered into their intentions; for she had an only son, who, being wild and dissipated, had got connected with the very gang at present in her cabin, and through Whelan's means (he having informed against him) was transported. An Irish mother soon looks upon the faults of a darling child with levity: and when he was torn from her arms, in the madness of grief she had vowed vengeance against Whelan; and though he soon after removed to where he then was, she followed him, and took up her residence on the mountain, where, as she was a stranger, and had no apparent means of living, a report of her communion with evil spirits was soon spread abroad. This she rather encouraged than otherwise, by the advice of the men whom she fixed on as the completers of her revenge, and by such means the lights and nightly noises were placed to the account of anything but their real cause.

She had endured many griefs, and many mortifications, from her reputation as a witch, but met every thing in that way with patience, as the dream of her soul was revenge, and that dream by such means alone could be realized. However, when on the very point of its completion, one of those sudden and mysterious changes which often

takes place in the human mind made her waver in her purpose; and the child of her intended victim having behaved so tenderly and so kindly when all the rest hooted at and tormented her, made her fervently wish that she could turn the fierce men around her from that fell purpose which she herself had nourished till it grew into a fixed, and, she dreaded, an unalterable determination.

"Hadn't yez betther wait," she tremblingly began, scarcely knowing what she was about to propose—"another night 'ill do as well for Whelan."

"How's this," interrupted one of them, "Nanny, you growing lukewarm!—you proposin' another night—are you beginnin' to be afeard we'll be hindhered from payin' him off, or are you repentin' yer former anxious desire?"

"No—no!" hastily answered she, dreading lest they should discover her feelings, as she well knew that many amongst them had revenge to be gratified as well as herself; "I don't repine as regards him, bud—bud—his daughter—poor little Minny—the purty goolden-haired child!—I wouldn't like any thing 'ud harm her, an' I'm afeard ov her bein' hurted—that's all."

"*He* did not feel so six years ago," said a deep voice at her elbow, "whin yer only son was sint off from home an' counthry through *his* manes!"

Nanny started, she knew not why, at the tones of the speaker, and turned round to look closer at him; but his back was towards her, and a large loose coat prevented all recognition of his person; besides, bringing an occasional newly enrolled stranger there, was a common circumstance, so she soon forgot the momentary surprise she had met in her anxiety about their intention.

"He is a brute—his heart is harder nor steel, an' he must be punished," said another, whose bent brow and flashing black eye spoke of malignity and crime.

"But his child—his poor little Minny!" exclaimed Nanny, "sure you wouldn't injure her—she hasn't deserved id at yer hands—she has done nothin', but is a sweet an' kind-hearted crathur. Oh! iv you had seen her whin I was in the village, an' the boys were hootin' an' peltin' me, an' no one interfered to protect the hated Nanny—iv you had seen the little angel how she stood before me, an' cried out 'shame!' an' held up the pitcher for me to dhrink, an' helped me to rise, offerin' me the shelter of her father's house, little dhramin' ov whom she was spakin' to—you wouldn't have a thought ov hurtin' her—bud—no one—no one could harm Minny!—she is too sweet, too pure, too like a little angel!"

"A hair of the child's head shall not be touched!" said the same deep voice that had before made Nanny start; "bud *he*, the informher an' the prosecuthor, must feel our vengeance!"

Nanny was silent—she saw that further parley was useless, and was obliged to bear with the concession she had already obtained. Meanwhile, the men having ascertained that it was time they were stirring, hastily equipped themselves, and prepared to start. When they were leaving the house, the stranger, whose voice had so startled her, took her hand, and though his face was studiously averted, she heard him say solemnly—

"Nanny, good bye!—my promise I'll keep sacred—the good child shall not be touched!"

She had not time to utter her thanks, for his hand as hastily relinquished its hold, and ere she could speak, all were gone, and she heard the buzz of their voices, as in a group they descended the mountain.

The bright moonbeams silvered the motionless leaves of the trees that surrounded Whelan's cottage—there was not a stir within—no light gleamed from the lattice, and the small thin brook that bubbled through the long grass a little in its front, seemed to hush its merry song to a mere low trickling sound, as if in unison with the universal repose. A dark group of figures stood in the little garden before the door, as if debating how they should act. Two of them, separated a little from the rest, conferred together, one of whom was the stranger we have already noticed, and the other the man we have spoken of as seeming to possess some command over them all. Suddenly the latter started, and exclaimed in the quick, sharp tone of command—

"Advance, men, an' smash the door—there's no use in delayin' longer."

An almost instantaneous crash was the answer, and the door flew from its hinges, and four or five of the men rushed into the cottage, while the rest kept watch outside. Exclamations of surprise, mingled with harsh epithets, were heard within; and then they appeared a second time, dragging with them the unfortunate and trembling owner, whom they had just torn from his bed. A loud shout from the rest spoke their eagerness for his punishment; and amidst prayers for mercy, and entreaties, he was dragged to the centre of the garden, placed on his knees, and his hands firmly tied behind his back.

"Now, Misther Whelan, *acushla*," asked one, in a jeering tone, "would you be jist pleased to make yer choice between two purty little invintions of ours—*cardin'* an' *ear-ticklin'*."

The poor man trembled violently, and

his livid lips opened, but he could not utter a word.

"What an obstinate, silent ould baste you are," said the same man, "not to give a civil answer to my question. Bud maybe the look o' this plaything id drive spake out ov you—oh, you may stare now!" Saying this, he drew forth a board with a thick handle, the bottom part of which was closely studded with nails and sharp pieces of iron, in imitation of the cards they use for wool, and continued—"Would you admire the taste of this in the flesh on your back, my informin' codger!—eh?"

Upon this, shouts of "card him! card him!" arose from the group, and his hands were quickly unloosed, and he was violently dashed on his face, while some held his legs and others his arms. Then his back was stripped, and the stranger laid the board flatly on it, with the iron points touching the flesh, while another stood up with the large mallet ready to drive them in, the shrieks of the victim becoming more and more faint. Just as the man who held the weapon last named was about to strike, and just as a demon grin of satisfied vengeance distorted the otherwise handsome features of the stranger, a light and tiny form flew screaming towards them, her long yellow hair floating in the night-breeze, and her white dress hanging loosely about her delicate limbs. It was Minny, who, unmindful of all, and seeing only her father, threw herself on her knees beside him, exclaiming in tones of agony:

"Oh, my father—my dear father—what is the matter?—what are they goin' to do wid you?"

The stranger started at the tones of her voice, and on gazing at her for a moment, flung the card to a distance, and catching her in his arms, kissed away the tears which covered her cheeks, as she struggled for release.

"Is it *you*," he said with much emotion, "that I promised to purtect?—*You*, who succored an' saved me when I was dyin' for want? 'An' are *you* the daughter ov Whelan the procthor?"

The men, perplexed at the apparition of the child, mechanically had released their prisoner; and he, starting up with the sudden hope of freedom, stood confronting the stranger, who yet held his child.

"Gracious Providence!" he exclaimed in wonder, as the moonlight streamed on the face he was trying to recognize—"Is id—can id be Robert Dillon?"

"Yis, Whelan!" was the answer, "it is the man you name—the man you caused to be thried an' banished, an' the man who came here to have revinge!"

"Oh, don't hurt him—don't hurt him—he is *my* father!" cried the little Minny, who now also seemed to recognize him.

"Iv he was surrounded wid fiends," answered Dillon, kissing her fair smooth brow, "iv he was for ever on the watch, I'd still have my revenge: bud for your sake, sweet, good-natured child—for your sake, I'll not allow him to be touched!"

A murmur here began to rise among some of the men, while the leader, with one or two others, seemed to take part with the returned son of Nanny Dillon. Upon this he added—

"I was weary an' wake wid fatigue an' hunger—I couldn't move a step further than jist to lave the road an' lie in a dhry ditch, as I thought, to die, jist as I complated the journey to my native place! But this little girl—this goolden-haired child—kem to me, an' raised my head, an' poured a sweet draught of milk into my mouth, an' brought me food, an' sat by me, an' talked wid me, till I was at last able to join wid you! An' afther this—*afther this*, would you have me harm any one belongin' to her—even though he is my bitterest inimy?"

The quick changing of purpose—the sudden transitions of the Irish nature—are proverbial; and *then* those who had been loudest in their murmurs were loudest in their cries of approval; and a deep *huzza* of exultation at the magnanimity he displayed, told Dillon that he had little to fear from their opposition. So once more embracing the little girl, he gave her hand to her father, and taking the leader's arm, strode away, exclaiming:

"Whelan, you may thank your child—for 'tis she has saved you!"

The party all followed after him; and in a few moments more there was no trace of the scene of violence that had been partly enacted, and the brook's low bubblings, as before, alone disturbed the silence of the slumbering night.

We will not attempt to describe poor Nanny's joy at her son's making himself known, and informing her of the circumstances that had taken place—enough to say, he had managed to escape before his time was out; but as no one informed against him, he was suffered to remain in peace, and manage a small farm in the next county, where he and his mother soon after retired, as he determined totally to forsake his old mischievous pranks.

We were present at the village altar, when Minny, who had grown up in beauty and gentleness, gave her hand to a youth—the selected one of her heart—and her gray-headed parent looked meekly on, blessing that Providence who had given him such a child.

VALENTINE M'CLUTCHY,

THE IRISH AGENT.

PREFACE.

It was not my intention to have written any Preface to this book, but to have allowed it simply to speak for itself. As it is very likely, however, that both it and the motives of its author may be misrepresented by bigoted or venal pens, I think it necessary to introduce it to the reader by a few brief observations. In the first place, then, I beg to say, that the work presents phases of Irish life and manners that have never been given to the public before by any other writer upon the same subject. So far, therefore, the book is a perfectly new book—not only to the Irish people, but also to the English and Scotch. I know not whether the authenticity of the facts and descriptions contained in it may be called in question; but this I *do* know, that there is not an *honest man*, on either side, who has lived in the north of Ireland, and reached the term of fifty years, who will not recognize the conduct and language of the northern Orangemen as just, truthful, and not one whit exaggerated. To our friends across the Channel it is only necessary to say, that I was born in one of the most Orange counties in Ireland (Tyrone)—that the violence and licentious abuses of these armed civilians were perpetrated before my eyes—and that the sounds of their outrages may be said still to ring in my ears.

I have written many works upon Irish life, and up to the present day the man has never lived who could lay his finger upon any passage of my writings, and say "*that is false.*" I cannot, however, avoid remarking here, that within the last few years, a more enlarged knowledge of life, and a more matured intercourse with society, have enabled me to overcome many absurd prejudices with which I was imbued. Without compromising, however, the *truth* or *integrity* of any portion of my writings, I am willing to admit, which I do frankly, and without hesitation, that I published in my early works passages which were not calculated to do any earthly good; but, on the contrary, to give unnecessary offence to a great number of my countrymen. It is due to myself to state this, and to say, that in the last edition of my works I have left as many of these passages out as I readily could, without diminishing the interest, or disturbing the narrative.

A fortiori, then, this book may be considered as full of truth and fidelity as any I have ever written: and I must say, that in writing it I have changed no principle whatsoever. I am a liberal Conservative, and, I trust, a rational one; but I am not, nor ever was, an Orangeman; neither can I endure their exclusive and arrogant assumption of loyalty, nor the outrages which it has generated. In what portion of my former writings, for instance, did I ever publish a line in their favor, or in favor of any secret and illegal confederacy?

Again, with regard to the Landlords and Agents, have I not written a tale called the "Poor Scholar," and another called "Tubber Derg"? in both of which their corruptions and oppressions are exposed. Let it not be mistaken. The two great curses of Ireland are bad Landlords and bad Agents, and in nineteen cases out of every twenty, the origin of the crime lies with the Landlord or Agent, instead of the tenant.

With respect to the Established Church of forty years ago, if there is any man living who asserts that I have not *under-drawn* her, rather than otherwise, he is less intimate with truth than I could wish. On this subject I challenge and defy inquiry. I grant you she is much changed for the better now; but yet there is much to be done in her still. It is true Irishmen at present get Mitres, a fact which was unknown forty years ago. We have now more Evangelicism, and consequently more sleekness and hypocrisy, more external decorum, and, I would also trust, more internal spirituality. We have now many eminent and pious Prelates in the Church, whose admirable example is enough even to shame the Clergymen under them into a sense of their duty. It is to be wished that we had many more such as they, for

they are wanted. The Irish Evangelical party are certainly very numerous, and they must pardon me a slight anachronism or two regarding them, concerning what has been termed the Modern Reformation in these volumes. Are those who compose this same party, by the way, acquainted with their own origin? If not, I will tell them. They were begotten by the active spirit of the Church of Rome, upon their own establishment, when she was asleep; so that they owe their very existence to those whom they look upon as their enemies: and if it were only for this reason alone, there ought to be more peace between them. In England the same spirit has effected a similar seduction on *that* Establishment, but with this difference, that the Puseyites are a much more obedient and dutiful progeny than the Irish Evangelicals —inasmuch as they have the grace to acknowledge the relationship.

This book was written to exhibit a useful moral to the country. It will startle, I humbly trust, many a hard-hearted Landlord and flagitious Agent into a perception of their duty, and it will show the negligent and reckless Absentee how those from whose toils and struggles he derives his support, are oppressed, and fleeced, and trampled on in his name.

It will also teach the violent and bigoted Conservative—or, in other words, the man who *still* inherits the Orange sentiments of past times—a lesson that he ought not to forget. It will also test the whole spirit of modern Conservatism, and its liberality. If there be at the press, or anywhere else, a malignant bigot, with great rancor and little honesty, it is very likely he will attack my book; and this, of course, he is at liberty to do. I deny, however, that modern Conservatism is capable of adopting or cherishing the outrages which disgraced the Orangemen of forty years ago, or even of a later period. And for this reason I am confident that the Conservative Press of Ireland will not only sustain me, but fight my battles, if I shall be ungenerously attacked. Let them look upon these pictures, and if it ever should happen that arms and irresponsible power shall be entrusted to them, perhaps the recollection of their truth may teach them a lesson of forbearance and humanity toward those that differ from them in creed, that may be of important service to our common country. If so, I shall have rendered a service to that country, which, as is usual, may probably be recognized as valuable, when perhaps my bones are mouldering in the clay, and my ear insensible to all such acknowledgments.

As for myself, I have been so completely sickened by the bigoted on each side, that I have come to the determination, as every honest Irishman ought, of knowing no party but my country, and of devoting such talents as God has given me, to the promotion of her general interests, and the happiness of her whole people.

DUBLIN, December 24, 1844.

CHAPTER I.

An Irish Fair and Spoileen Tent—A Marriage Proposal—An Under Agent—An Old Irish Squire and Union Lord.

THE town of Castle Cumber it is not our intention to describe at more length than simply to say, that it consists of two long streets, intersecting each other, and two or three lanes of cabins—many of them mud ones—that stretch out of it on each side at right angles. This street, and these straggling appendages, together with a Church, a Prison, a Court-house, a Catholic chapel, a few shops, and half a dozen public houses, present to the spectator all the features that are generally necessary for the description of that class of remote country towns of which we write. Indeed, with the exception of an ancient Stone Cross, that stands in the middle of the street, and a Fair green, as it is termed, or common, where its two half-yearly fairs are held, and which lies at the west end of it, there is little or nothing else to be added. The fair I particularly mention, because on the day on which the circumstances I am about to describe occurred, a fair was held in the town, and upon the green in question. The month was December—the day stormy and unpropitious. There had been a deep snow and hard frost for nearly three weeks before; but now the aspect of the white earth contrasted wildly with the large masses of black clouds which hung motionless in the air, and cast a dark and gloomy spirit not only over the appearance of inanimate nature, but into the heart of man himself.

About noon, just when the whole fair had been assembled, the storm commenced with wind, sleet, and rain. Never was a more striking or unexpected change produced. Women tucked up, nearly to the knees, their garments, soaked with wet, clinging to their bodies and limbs, as if a part of themselves —men drenched and buttoned up to the chin—all splashing through the slippery streets, their shoes spouting with snow-broth —the falling of tents—the shouting against the loudness of the storm, in order to be

heard—the bleating of sheep, lowing of cattle, the deafening and wild hum of confused noises—all, when added to the roaring of the sweeping blast, the merciless pelting of the rain, and the inclement character of the whole day, presented a scene that was tempestuous and desolate beyond belief. Age, decrepid and shivering—youth, benumbed and stiffened with cold—rich and poor, man and woman, all had evidently but one object in view, and that was shelter.

Love, charity, amusement, business, were all either disappointed or forced to suspend their operations, at least for the present. Every one ran or walked as quickly as possible, with the exception of some forenoon drunkard, who staggered along at his ease, with an eye half indolent and half stupid, careless, if not unconscious of the wild uproar, both elemental and otherwise, by which he was surrounded.

Nay, the very beggars and impostors—to whom, in general, severe weather on such occasions is a godsend, as it presents them to their fellow-creatures in a more pitiable aspect—were glad to disperse. In truth, the effect of the storm upon them was perfectly miraculous. Many a poor creature, blind from birth or infancy, was gifted with, or restored to excellent sight; the maimed were suddenly cured—the deaf made to hear—the dumb to speak—and the study baccagh, or cripple, bounded away, at the rate of six miles an hour, cursing the whole thing as a bad spec—a dead failure.

Solemn assignations of long promise, rustic courtships, and earnest match-makings, were all knocked up, unless in case of those who availed themselves of the early part of the day. Time and place, in fact, were completely forgotten by the parties, each being anxious only to secure the nearest and most commodious shelter. Nay, though ashamed to write it, we are bound to confess that some of our countrymen were ungallant enough, on meeting with their sweethearts, fairly to give them the slip, or only to recognize them with a kind of dreary and equivocal salutation, that might be termed a cross between a wink and a shiver. Others, however, gallantly and magnanimously set the tempest at defiance, or blessed their stars for sending them an opportunity of sitting so close to their fair inamoratas, in order that their loving pressure might, in some degree, aided by a glass of warm punch, compensate the sweet creatures for the unexpected drenching they had got.

It has been well observed, that there is no class of life in which instances of great virtue and fortitude may not be found; and the justness of the apothegm was fully corroborated here. Cold, bitter, tempestuous, and terrible as was the day, amidst rain, wind, sleet, and hail, there might be seen, in a thoroughfare about the centre of the town, a cripple, apparently paralytic from the middle down, seated upon the naked street, his legs stretched out before him, hirpling onward, by alternately twisting his miserable body from right to left; while, as if the softer sex were not to be surpassed in feats of hardihood or heroism, a tattered creature, in the shape of woman, without cap, shoe, or stocking, accompanied by two naked and shivering children, whose artificial lamentations were now lost in those of nature, proceeded up the street, in the very teeth of the beating tempest, attempting to sing some dismal ditty, with a voice which resembled the imagined shriekings of a ghoul, more than the accents of a human being. These two were the only individuals who, in the true spirit of hardened imposture, braved all the fury of the elments in carrying out their principles—so true is it, that a rogue will often advance farther in the pursuit of a knavish object, than an honest man will in the attainment of a just one. To them may be added the poor fool of the town, Joe Lockhart, who, from his childhood, was known to be indifferent to all changes of weather, and who now, elated by the festive spirit of a fair day, moved about from place to place, without hat or shoe—neither of which he ever wore—just with as much indifference as if it had been a day in the month of June.

If the inclemency of the day, however, was injurious to the general transaction of business, there was one class to whose interests it amply contributed—I mean the publicans, and such as opened *shebeen* houses, or erected refreshment tents for the occasion. In a great portion of Ireland there are to be found, in all fairs, what the people term *spoileen* tents—that is, tents in which fresh mutton is boiled, and sold out, with bread and soup, to all customers. I know not how it happens; but be the motive or cause what it may, scarcely any one ever goes into a *spoileen* tent, unless in a mood of mirth and jocularity. To eat spoileen seriously, would be as rare a sight as to witness a wife dancing on her husband's coffin. It is very difficult, indeed, to ascertain the reason why the eating of fresh mutton in such circumstances is always associated with a spirit of strong ridicule and humor. At all events, nothing can exceed the mirth that is always to be found among the parties who frequent such tents. Fun, laughter, jest, banter, attack, and repartee fly about in all directions, and the only sounds heard are those of light-hearted noise and enjoyment.

Perhaps if the cause of this were closely traced, it might be found to consist in a sense of shame, which Paddy good humoredly attempts to laugh away. It is well known that the great body of the people pass through life, without ever tasting beef or mutton—a circumstance which every one acquainted with the country knows to be true. It is also a fact, that nineteen out of every twenty who go in to eat spoileen, are actuated more by curiosity than hunger, inasmuch as they consist of such persons as have never tasted it before. This, therefore, being generally known, and each possessing latent consciousness of its truth, it is considered best to take the matter in good humor, and escape the shame of the thing, together with the poverty it implies, by turning it into ridicule and jest. This indeed, is pretty evident, from the nature of the spoileen keeper's observations on being paid, which is usually—"Thank you, Barney; you may now considher yourself a gintleman;" or if a female—"Long life to you, Bridget; you may now go into high life any time."

It is unnecessary to say, that on the day in question, the spoileen tents were crowded to suffocation. In general these are pretty large, sometimes one, occasionally two fires being kept in each; over these, placed upon three large stones, or suspended from three poles, united at top, is the pot or pots in which the spoileen is boiled; whilst patiently in a corner of the tent, stand the poor invalid sheep, that are doomed, as necessity may require, to furnish forth this humorous entertainment.

Truth to tell, there are many reasons why this feast is a comic one. In the first place, the description of mutton which they get is badly calculated to prejudice honest Paddy in favor of that food in general, it being well known that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the sacrifice falls upon disease, poverty, and extreme old age; or, if there be any manifestation of humanity in the selection, it is—that while the tenderer sex is spared, the male one is in general certain to be made the victim, but never unless when he has been known to reach a most patriarchal length of years. Then the suddenness of the act which converts a portion of the venerable patriarch into a component part of honest Paddy, is equally remarkable; for it generally happens that the animal now standing in a corner of the tent, will in about half an hour be undergoing the process of assimilation in his (Paddy's) gastric region. The elastic quality of the meat is indeed extraordinary, and such as, with the knowledge of that fact, does sometimes render Paddy's treat of *spoileen* to his sweetheart an act of very questionable gallantry. Be this as it may, there is scarcely anything in life richer than to witness a tent of spoileen eaters in full operation. Tugging, pulling, dragging, tearing, swinging of the head from side to side, want of success, loss of temper, fatigue of jaw, recovery of good humor, and the wolfish rally, mingled with mock curses, loud laughter, shouting and singing, all going on together, are the ordinary characteristics of this most original banquet.

About the centre of the town stood one of those houses of entertainment which holds rank in such towns as a second rate inn. On the day in question it was painfully overcrowded, and such was the hubbub of loud talk, laughter, singing, roaring, clattering of pewter pots, and thumping of tables, that it was almost impossible to hear or understand anything in the shape of conversation. To this, however, there was one exception. A small closet simply large enough to hold a table, and two short forms, opened from a room above stairs looking into the stable yard. In this there was a good fire, at which sat two men, being, with a bed and small table, nearly as many as it was capable of holding with ease.

One of these was a stout, broad-shouldered person, a good deal knock-kneed, remarkably sallow in the complexion, with brows black and beetling. He squinted, too, with one eye, and what between this circumstance, a remarkably sharp but hooked nose, and the lowering brows aforesaid, there was altogether about him a singular expression of acuteness and malignity. In every sense he was a person against whom you would feel disposed to guard yourself, whether in the ordinary intercourse of life and its transactions, or still more in the secret workings of the darker and more vindictive passions. He was what they call a down-looking man; that is, one who in conversation could never look you straight in the face, which fact, together with a habit of quivering observable in his upper lip, when any way agitated, gave unquestionable proof that his cowardice was equal to his malignity, as his treachery was to both. His age might be about fifty, or, perhaps beyond it.

The other was a tall man, well featured, of a clear fresh complexion, a fine blue eye, and altogether, a kind, benevolent expression of countenance. He had been rather stout, but not robust, and might, perhaps, at the time we write of, be about the same age as his companion. He was evidently a man of respectability, well dressed, not badly educated, and on the present occasion wore good broadcloth and top boots. The contrast between him and the other, was in nothing

more striking than the honest, joyous spirit of his laughter, which rang clearly and mellowly on your ear, leaving behind it an expression of candor, light-heartedness, and good nature, that could not be mistaken.

"It's idle talk to speak about going such a day as this," observed the beetle-browed man, who stirred up the fire with something that passed for a poker, in reply; "and to tell you the truth, upon my credit, Mr. M'Loughlin, I'm not sorry that we happened to meet. You're a man I've a sincere regard for, and always had—and on that account we'll have something more to drink." So saying, he stamped upon the floor, which was exactly over the bar, in order that some one might attend them with the liquor.

"I'm obliged to you, Val," replied his companion dryly, "for your good opinion of me; but at the same time, God forbid that I should ever deserve it—eh? ha, ha, ha. Well, well, *let* us have some drink, as you say, at all events; only it must be at my expense as well as the rest. Well, sure enough, you were the devil's whip-thong in your day, and if you haven't repented yet, all I can say is, there is little time to lose, if you wish to have a bright look up at the last day"—

"Ha, ha, go on, Mr. M'Loughlin, we all know you, the same pleasant fellow you ever were, and upon my credit, as good a companion as any one could sit with. All I wish is that we had here more of the family on both sides, that the boys and girls might have something to whisper to one another."

"I didn't care we had, Val, my boy; but how on earth will we get home? Indeed such a terrible day I've seldom seen, for many years."

"Faith, it's good to have a dry roof over our heads, and a warm fire before us, at any rate. There's many a poor half-drowned devil in the fair, would give a trifle to change places with us; there is, upon my credit."

In a few minutes the refreshments came in, much to the satisfaction of the parties, who felt a strong sense of comfort, on contrasting the warmth of their snug little room with the uproar of the storm that raged without, and spent its fury upon the cold, bleak, and almost deserted streets.

"I am glad, indeed, Mr. M'Loughlin," continued his companion, "that I happened to meet with you to-day—you and I are now neighbors, and surely we ought to live like neighbors."

"Well," replied M'Loughlin dryly, "and don't we do so? You haven't found me troublesome as a neighbor, have you? Eh, Val, my man?"

"No," said the other, "certainly I have not—upon my credit I haven't, an' that's what I complain of; neither you nor your family associate with me or mine."

"Tut, Val, man," replied M'Loughlin, still in the same dry, ironical tone as before, "surely it's not long since you came to march us. It's only two years and a half since you wormed out the O'Hagans, then the farm lay near two years idle—ay—why, man, you're not four months our neighbor yet."

"No—not all out; still, Mr. M'Loughlin, somehow you don't treat me or my family as neighbors. If you have to borrow anything, no matter what it is, you never come to me for it. It was only the other day that you wanted a rope to pull that breeding mare of yours out of the drain—and yet you sent past me near half a mile, up to Widow Lenehan's to borrow it."

"Heavens pity you, Val, for it's a hard case; but every one has their troubles, and it seems you are not without your own, poor man—eh—ha! ha! ha!—Well, never mind, my friend; you're better off now for all that, than when you were only a process-server on the estate; however, I'll tell you what, Val the Vulture—you see I can be neighborly sometimes—just let me know whenever you stand in need of a rope—mark, I don't say whenever you *deserve it*—and may I never taste worse liquor than this, but you shall have it with right good will, hoping still that you'll make a proper use of it—ha! ha! ha! Come, man, in the mean time take your liquor, an' don't look as if you'd eat me without salt; for I tell you if you tried it, you'd find Brian M'Loughlin a tougher morsel than you imagine."

"If anybody else spoke to me in the style you do, Brian, I'd not be apt to overlook it; upon my credit and reputation I would not."

"No, but you'd look round it may be, ha! ha! ha! but go on, Vulture, who minds what I say?"

"Nobody, to be sure, because you make one laugh whether they will or not."

"Faith, Vulture dear, and that's what nobody can tax you with; or if you do, it's on the wrong side of the mouth you do it—and they say that same is but indifferent mirth, Val."

"I wish, Brian, you would sometimes speak seriously, and besides, you're always hard, too hard, upon me. Anything I did harshly, it was always in the discharge of my duty."

"Never mind, Val, the fewer of those old sores you rip up, the better for yourself—I'm not going to put you through your catechism about them. If you're wise, let byegones be byegones; take that advice from me. Whatever tricks you may have practised, you're

now a wealthy man, and for the same reason the world will help you forget them, if you keep your toe in your pump."

"I *am* a wealthy man, and can set the world at defiance, if it goes to that; yes, Brian, a wealthier man than the world thinks—and as I said, I defy it."

"Faith, and you needn't, for the world won't put you to that trouble, at least a great part of it, if you were ten times the vulture you are, so long as you have a full purse. Eh, do you perceive me? ha! ha! ha!"

"Well, damn the devil, heaven pardon me for swearing, for it's a thing I hate——"

"——And yet, many a fat oath you've bolted in your time. Now on the nick of your conscience, Val darling, how many Bibles did you wear out, by a long and honest course of hard swearing?—eh—ha! ha! ha!"

"Ha! ha! ha! Brian, I see there is little use in speaking to you, or being angry with you; you are a devilish pleasant hearty fellow, only something a little too rough about the tongue."

"Never mind, Val, by all accounts it would be easy to reckon them; but seriously, is it true that the lower joint of your right thumb is horny, in consequence of having caught the character of your conscience from having kissed it so often?"

"Go on, Brian, go on; to be sure it is; they may say what they like—I am not depending upon them, and I care little. But now, Brian, there is one thing I *will* say, and I have long wished for an opportunity of saying it."

"That's my bully, out with it; don't be dashed, Val, you'll get over your modesty; upon my credit you will—ha! ha! ha!"

"D—n it, you can't be serious for a minute; but no matter, I *will* out with it—here's your health and fireside, in the mean time!" Brian merely nodded in reply, but said nothing. "Now you know, Brian, your farm and mine lie very snugly beside one another; observe that *that's what I begin with.*"

"Very good."

"Again, your family and mine live very close to one another, too."

"Very good."

"Now, what if part of the farms, and part of the families were to become united, and get spliced together, eh?"

"Very good, very good."

"Well, but do you really think so, Brian?"

"Go on, if you please, and let us hear more of it; state your case, as you say at the sessions."

"Well, then, there's your daughter Mary, a handsome girl, and, by all accounts, as good as she is handsome—and there's my son Phil, who, excepting the *cast* *—is—but, at any rate, if he's no beauty, he's a stout young fellow, for you know yourself that that little closeness about the knees is always a sign of strength."

"That little closeness, Val!—why, Vulture darling, isn't one knee sugar candy, and the other licking it?—but go on, it's not bad for so far, go on; upon my credit it's not."

"I am glad you like it for so far—then seriously, what would you think of a marriage between them?"

"Devil a prettier move you could make, Val. As you say, the farms and the families lie convenient to one another—and I don't see what's to prevent your proposal from being realized. You'll do well for Phil, of course—for although he has the squint in both eyes, instead of only in one, like yourself—and is twisted very much about the knees, more than you are a good deal—still, Val—neighbor Val, as I now may call you—he is a stout, left-legged, round-shouldered blade; and I question whether the red poll does not become him better than a black one like yours would."

"Why I grant you, Brian, that he looks better on horseback than on foot, and when mounted on 'Handsome Harry,' with top boots and spurs, it's not on every highway you could meet his equal."

"Devil a lie in *that*, Val—nor a boy better made to ride or shoot round a corner you could not meet in Europe—but never mind; go on, Val—go on, my friend; no, faith, on hill or in hollow, it would not be easy to match him."

"He'd make an excellent good husband."

"He would not be *your* son if he did not—well?"

"Well, as to that, if the truth was known, I know where the blame would lie—your daughter will not be the shrew and scold to him that my blister was to me—upon my credit she won't."

"Devil a lie in that either, Val—well, well—oh! I'll take my oath she won't."

"I don't see why he and she might not be very happy together—you are able to do handsomely for her, as report goes."

"And willing, Val, and a bad father I'd be, if I were not."

"Well then, Brian, so far all looks fair, and devilish glad I am that I broached the thing at once. I have been thinking of it ever since I came to the neighborhood—upon my credit I have."

"Faith, and so am I glad of it—but what's to be done next, Val darling?"

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* Squint.

"Why the less time that's lost upon it the better—we must bring the youngsters together till they get acquainted—then we can have another meeting, and settle the match out of hand. Did you ever see Phil on 'Handsome Harry?'"

"Didn't I?—to be sure I did—and upon my word, Val, he's a credit to the horse he rides, as the horse is to him—a comely couple they are in truth. But, Val, or neighbor Val, as I now may call you, don't you think it would be better to wind up this business now that our hand's in for it? Let us hear what you'll do, and I'll follow you on my part, for there's no use in losing time about it—upon my credit there's not."

"What would you think, then, of the farm we're in now—that is, the O'Hagan property, as you call it? Suppose I gave him that, what will you come down with for the girl? I know it can't be under three hundred—come, say three hundred, and it's a match."

"Three hundred! Oh! Val, you're too soft—too moderate—too mild—indeed you are—why three hundred would be nothing against the O'Hagan property, as you call it—and, indeed, I don't intend to put my daughter off under five hundred, and that's nearly double what three is—eh, Val, what do you say, upon your credit now?"

"Faith, I'll not quarrel with you if you make it six or eight."

"Well now," said M'Loughlin, rising up, whilst his honest features were lit with indignation, "this joke or this impudence on your part, has gone far enough—listen to me. What did I or my family do, I ask my own conscience in the name of God—what sin did we commit—whom did we oppress—whom did we rob—whom did we persecute—that a scoundrel like you, the bastard spawn of an unprincipled profligate, remarkable only for drunkenness, debauchery, and blasphemy—what, I say, did I and my family do, that you, his son, who were, and are to this day, the low, mean, willing scourge of every oppressor, the agent of their crimes—the instrument of their villianies—you who undermined the honest man—who sold and betrayed the poor man—who deceived and misled the widow and her orphans, and rose upon their ruin—who have robbed your employers as well as those you were employed against—a double traitor—steeped in treachery, and perjured a thousand times to the core of your black and deceitful heart—what crime, I say again, did I or mine commit—that we, whose name and blood has been without a stain for a thousand years, should suffer the insult that you now have offered us—eh, look me in the face now if you can, and answer me if you are able?"

M'Loughlin, as he concluded, calmly folded his arms, and looked at his companion resolutely but sternly. The other, to do him justice, did certainly raise his head, and fix his evil eye upon him for a moment—it dropped after a single glance; in truth, he quailed before M'Loughlin; his upper lip, as usual, quivered—his brow lowered, and looked black as midnight, whilst all the rest of his face became the color of ashes. In fact, that white smile, which is known to be the very emblem of cowardice and revenge, sat upon his countenance, stamping upon it at once the character of the spectre and the demon—a being to be both feared and hated.

"Well, Brian M'Loughlin," returned the other, "hear me."

"Don't dare to Brian me, sir," returned M'Loughlin; "I'm a very humble man, and ought to be an humble man, for I know well what a sinner I am before God—but for all that, and if it were against even religion itself—I feel too proud to suffer you to speak to me as you do—no—don't Brian me, but listen and let me show you what you are, and what you have been; I can't say what you *will* be, *that* does not lie with any but God."

"Well," said M'Clutchy, "go on; I now can hear you, and what is more, I wish to hear you—and whisper—*speak your worst.*"

It is said, that both cowardice and despair have their courage, and it would appear from the manner and action of this man, that he now felt actuated by some vague feeling resembling that which we have described. He rose up and said,

"Brian M'Loughlin, do you think I ever can forget this?"

"What do you mean by that," said M'Loughlin, "look me in the face, I say, and tell me what you mean by it. I'm a man, and an honest man, and there's no treachery about me."

The sternness with which he spoke, made the other quail again.

"There was little in it," he replied, in a rebuked but cold and malignant spirit; "I didn't think you were so violent. I bore a great deal from you this day, Mr. M'Loughlin—a great deal, indeed, and so patiently as I bore it too; upon my credit I did."

M'Loughlin made no reply, but stamped on the floor, in order to bring up some person to whom he might pay the reckoning.

"You need not stamp," said the other, "this is my share of the reckoning."

"Your share, no: I told you before, it must not be yours. I wouldn't have it said, that bit or sup, paid for by your ill-gotten

wealth, should ever cross my lips — no, no."

The waiter, or rather waitress, a red-haired, barefooted wench, now came up.

"Here," said M'Loughlin, "take the refreshments we've had last out of that, and keep the change to yourself. I have settled what we've had before, as well as this."

"And why not allow me to settle for this?" asked M'Clutchy.

"Because," replied this honest and respectable man, "I could not swallow a thimbleful of anything paid for by your money; what is it? If I did I would dream for weeks of all that you have done, or if I didn't dream, the sorrows and the wrongs of my near relative, Widow O'Hagan and her family, would prevent me from sleeping; the Kellys that you've driven to beggary—The Gormleys that you got put out—good God! and who now holds their places? Your own cousin. It's useless, however, to mention all you've done. You, Val the Vulture, as the people call you, are one of those scourges that rise and flourish upon the distresses of the poor, and the injustice that you yourself bring upon them by your falsehood and calumny; and all because the property they live on is neglected by those who have a right to look after it. Ay, there is another of your white and cowardly laughs. Well, you know that there is not a neglected estate in the country but can produce another vulture like yourself, playing the same heartless pranks upon the poor people—lying, misrepresenting, swaggering over and robbing them, and that, too, in the open face of day, merely because you think there is no one to bring you to an account.

"Now go home," he added, "and when next you want to get a wife for your spanking son, that's likely to become a squireen upon our hands, don't come to Brian M'Loughlin, who knows you from the paring of the nails to the core of the heart."

M'Clutchy looked at him and laughed again; "before you go, at all events," he replied, "I hope you remember the observation I made when I introduced the discourse."

"I can't say I do," said M'Loughlin, "but I suppose you will let us hear it."

"I will," replied Val, and his brow darkened as before. "It was this—your farm and mine lie very snugly together—observe, I said, '*that's what I begin with*'—didn't I say that?"

"You did, and now what else do you say?"

"The very same thing—*that your farm and mine lie snugly together*—and *mark me*, Mr. M'Loughlin——"

"I do—oh, upon my credit I do—ha, ha, ha!"

"*Then that's what I end with.*"

"Ah," replied M'Loughlin indignantly, "you think you have the ball at your own foot, now that old Topertoe is gone, and his son has made you his under agent. A nice job indeed it was, that transformed old drunken Tom Topertoe into Lord Cumber, and made his son, the present Lord, too proud to live on his own estate. However, I'd be glad to see the honest man that ever envied the same old Tom his title, when we all know that he got it for selling his country. As for you, Vulture, I defy and despise you; when my rent's due, thank God I am able to pay it, so you may do your worst. While Mr. Hickman's over you, the tenants have some protection, in spite of your villainy, you unprincipled scoundrel."

"Our farms lie snugly together, Mr. M'Loughlin, and *that's what I end with.*"

It was from the town of Castle Cumber, which we have described at the opening of our narrative, that old Tom Topertoe, a squire of the true Irish kidney, took his title. Topertoe, or Lord Castle Cumber, as we must now call him, like many others, had the high honor of being a Union Lord—that is to say his attachment to his principles was so steady, that he did not hesitate to sell his country for a title, and we may add, something besides. It is not our intention, at this distance of time, to discuss the merits of either the union or its repeal; but in justice to truth and honor, or, perhaps, we should rather say, fraud and profligacy, we are constrained to admit, that there is not to be found in the annals of all history, any political negotiation based upon such rank and festering corruption, as was the legislative union. Had the motives which actuated the English government towards this country been pure, and influenced by principles of equality and common justice, they would never have had recourse to such unparalleled profligacy. This is self-evident, for those who seek an honorable end will scorn to obtain it by foul and dishonorable means. The conduct of England, therefore, in this base and shameless traffic, is certainly a *primâ facie* evidence of her ultimate policy—a policy blacker in the very simplicity of its iniquity than its worst enemies can paint it, and so obvious in its character, that we question whether a man could be found, of ordinary information, belonging to *any* party, capable at this moment of deliberately and conscientiously defending it, so far as pertains to this transaction. But enough of this.

Before the union, old Topertoe was master

of three votes—that is, he sat himself for the county, and returned members for two boroughs. He was known by the sobriquet of *Pater Noster Tom*—not from any disposition to devotion; but because, whether in parliament, on the hustings, or, indeed, anywhere else, he never made a speech longer than the Lord's Prayer. And yet, short as it was, it generally puzzled the shrewdest and most sagacious of his audience to understand it. Still, though not without his faults, he was by no means a bad landlord, as landlords went. 'Tis true he was fond of his wine and of his wench—as a proof of which, it was well known that he seldom or ever went to bed with less than four or five bottles under his belt; and as touching the latter, that he had two agents in pay to cater for his passions. In both these propensities he was certainly countenanced by the usages and moral habits of the times; and the truth is, he grew rather popular than otherwise, precisely on account of them. He was bluff, boisterous, and not ill-natured—one of that bygone class who would horsewhip a tenant to-day and fight a duel for him to-morrow. Above all things, he resided on his estate, knew all his tenantry by name and person, and contracted, by degrees, a kind of anomalous attachment for them, merely because they were his property, and voted and fought for him at elections, and often fought *with* him touching their relative positions of landlord and tenant. Indeed, we question whether he would not enter into a quarrel as readily for a tenant as he would for a favorite dog or horse; and we are inclined to think, that to do him justice, he laid nearly as much value on the one as on the other—a circumstance which we dare say several of our modern landlords, both resident and absentee, will consider as, on our part, a good-humored stretch of fiction.

His speech at elections absolutely became a proverb in the country; and, indeed, when we remember the good-natured license of the times, as many still may, together with the singular blending of generosity and violence, horsewhipping and protection, mirth and mischief which characterized the bearing of such men as Topertoe, we are fain to think, to vary the proverb a little, that he might have spoken more and fared worse.

"Here I am again, ye blaggards; your own ould Topertoe, that never had a day's illness, but the gout, bad luck to it. Damn your bloods, ye affectionate rascals, sure you love me, and I love you, and 't isn't Gully Preston (his opponent) that can cut our loves in two. No, boys, he's not the blade to do that, at any rate! Hurra then, ye vagabones; ould Tom Topertoe for ever! He loves his bottle and his wench, and will make any rascal quiver on a daisy that would dare to say bow to your blankets. Now, Gully Preston, make a speech—if you can! Hurra for Tom Topertoe, that never had a day's illness, but the gout, bad luck to it! and don't listen to Gully Preston, boys! Hurra!"

This speech, from which he never varied, was waited for at elections with a vehemence of mirth and a force of popularity which no eloquence brought against him could withstand. Indeed, it was perfectly well known that it alone returned him, for when upon an occasion of considerable doubt and difficulty, the two parties of the county having been considered as equally balanced, he was advised by some foolish friend, or enemy in disguise, to address them in a serious speech, the consequences were near proving disastrous to his interests. When he commenced—"Gentlemen—upon an occasion of such important difficulty"—there was for about a quarter of a minute a dead silence—that of astonishment—Topertoe, however, who had stuck fast, was obliged to commence again—"Gentlemen—upon an occasion of such—" but it would not do, the groaning, shouting, hooting, and yelling, were deafening for some minutes, much to the gratification of his opponent. At length there was something like a pause, and several voices shouted out—"what the divil do you mane, Tom?" "He's showin' the garran bane at last," shouted another—"desartin' his colors!"—"oh! we're gintlemen now it seems, an' not his own blaggards, as we used to be—Tipertoe's vagabones that stood by him—oh no! Tom, to hell wid you and your gintlemen—three cheers for Gully Preston!"

Tom saw it was nearly over with him, and Preston's hopes ran high. "Aisy, boys," said the other, resuming his old, and, indeed, his natural manner—"Aisy, ye vagabones—Topertoe's ould speech for ever! Here I am again, ye blaggards, that never had a day's illness but the gout, bad luck to it!" &c., &c. This was enough, the old feeling of fun and attachment kindled up—the multitude joined him in his speech, precisely as a popular singer is joined by the gods of the upper gallery in some favorite air, and no sooner was it concluded, than the cheering, throwing up of hats, and huzzaing, gave ample proof that he had completely recovered his lost ground, and set himself right with the people.

Such is a brief of old Topertoe, the first Lord of Castle Cumber, who, by the way, did not wear his honors long, the gout, to which he was a martyr, having taken him from under his coronet before he had it a

year on his brow. He was one of the men peculiar to his times, or rather who aided in shaping them; easy, full of strong but gross impulses, quick and outrageous in resentment, but possessed of broad uncouth humor, and a sudden oblivion of his passion. Without reading or education—he was coarse, sensual, careless, and extravagant, having no stronger or purer principle to regulate him than that which originated in his passions or his necessities. Of shame or moral sanction he knew nothing, and consequently held himself amenable to the world on two points only—the laws of duelling and those of gaming. He would take an insult from no man, and always paid his gambling debts with honor; but beyond that, he neither feared nor cared for anything in *this* world—and being a member of the Hellfire Club, he did not believe in the other. In fact he was the very man on whose peculiar temperament and character a corrupt and wily politician might expect to impress his own principles with success. Topertoe was consequently not only the very man to sell his country, but to sell it at the highest price, and be afterwards the first to laugh, as he did, at his own corruption.

Of his eldest son, who of course succeeded to his rank and property, there is not so much to be said at present, because he will appear, to some extent, as an actor in our drama. It is enough then to say here that he inherited his father's vices, purged of their vulgarity and grossness, without a single particle of his uncertain and capricious good nature. In his manners he appeared more of the gentleman; was lively, shallow, and versatile; but having been educated at an English school and an English college, he felt, or affected to feel, all the fashionable prejudices of the day and of his class against his native country. He was an absentee from both pride and inclination, and it is not surprising then that he knew but little of Ireland, and that little was strongly to its disadvantage.

Another brother there was, whose unpretending character requires little else than merely that he should be named. The honorable Alexander Topertoe, who was also educated in England, from the moment his father stained what he conceived to be the honor of their family by receiving a title and twenty thousand pounds, as a bribe for his three votes against a native parliament—hung his head in mortification and shame, and having experienced at all times little else than neglect from his father and brother, he hurried soon afterwards to the continent with a heavy heart and a light purse, where for the present we must leave him.

CHAPTER II.

Christian Forgiveness—Birth and Origin of Mr. M'Clutchy—Mr. Hickman, the Head Agent—Darby O'Drive, the Bailiff—And an Instructive Dialogue.

Time, which passes with a slow but certain pace, had already crept twice around his yearly circle since the fair already described in the town of Castle Cumber. The lapse of three years, however, had made no change whatsoever in the heart or principles of Mr. Valentine M'Clutchy, although he had on his external manner and bearing. He now assumed more of the gentleman, and endeavored to impress himself upon those who came in contact with him, as a person of great authority and importance. One morning after the period just mentioned had elapsed, he and his graceful son, "Mister Phil," were sitting in the parlor of Constitution Cottage, for so they were pleased to designate a house which had no pretension whatever to that unpretending appellation.

"So father," said Phil, "you don't forget that such was the treatment M'Loughlin gave you!"

"Why, I remember it, Phil; but you know, Phil, I'm a patient and a forgiving man notwithstanding; you know that Phil; —ha, ha, ha!"

"That was certainly the worst case came across us yet," replied the son, "none of the rest ventured to go so far, even when you had less power than you have now."

"I didn't tell you all, Phil," continued the father, following up the same train of thought.

"And why not," said Phil, "why should you conceal anything from me?"

"Because," replied the other, "I think you have heard enough for the present."

The fact was, that M'Clutchy's consciousness of the truth contained in M'Loughlin's indignant reproaches, was such as prevented him from repeating them, even to his son, knowing right well that had he done so they could not exactly have looked each other in the face without sensations regarding their own conduct, which neither of them wished to avow. There is a hypocrisy in villainy sometimes so deep that it cannot bear to repeat its own iniquity, even in the presence of those who are aware of it, and in this predicament stood Valentine M'Clutchy.

"Maybe he has relented," said Phil, "or that he will give me his pretty daughter yet —and you know they have the cash. The linen manufactory of M'Loughlin and Harman is flourishing."

"No, no, Phil," replied the father, "you

must give her up—that's past—but no matter, I'll forgive him."

Phil looked at him and smiled. "Come, come, father," said he, "be original—that last is a touch of M'Slime—of honest Solomon. Keep back the forgiveness yet awhile, may be they may come round—begad, and upon my honor and reputation, I shouldn't wish to lose the girl—no, father, don't forgive them yet awhile."

"Phil, we'll do better for you, boy—don't be a fool, I say, but have sense—I tell you what, Phil," continued his father, and his face assumed a ghastly, deadly look, at once dark and pallid, "listen to me;—I'll forgive him, Phil, until the nettle, the chick-weed, the burdock, the fulsome preshagh, the black fungus, the slimiest weed that grows—aye, till the green mould of ruin itself, grows upon the spot that is now his hearth—till the winter rain beats into, and the winter wind howls over it."

"No marriage, then," said Phil.

"No marriage; but what keeps Darby O'Drive? the rascal should have been here before—oh no," said he, looking at his watch, "he has better than half an hour yet."

"What steps do you intend to take, father?"

"Phil, when I'm prepared, you shall know them. In the meantime leave me—I must write to M'Slime, or send to him. M'Slime's useful at a hint or suggestion, but, with all his wiliness and hypocrisy, not capable of carrying a difficult matter successfully out; he overdoes everything by too much caution, and consequently gets himself into ridiculous scrapes, besides I cannot and will not place full confidence in him. He is too oily, and cants too much, to be trusted; I think, still, we may use him and overreach him into the bargain. Are you going into Castle Cumber?"

"I am."

"Well, drop these couple of letters in the post office, and tell Rankin he must have the carts finished by Monday next, at the farthest, or it will be worse for him. By the way, I have that fellow in my eye too—he had the assurance to tell me the other day, that he could not possibly undertake the carts until he had M'Loughlin's job at the manufactory finished. Off with you now, I see O'Drive and Hanlon coming up."

Graceful Phil in a few minutes was mounted in his usual lofty state on "Handsome Harry," and dashed off to Castle Cumber.

It may not be improper here, before we proceed farther, to give the reader some additional knowledge of the parentage and personal history of Mr. Valentine M'Clutchy, as well as a brief statement concerning the Castle Cumber property, and the gentleman who acted in the capacity of head agent.

The mother, then, of Valentine M'Clutchy, or as he was more generally called Val the Vulture, was daughter to the county goaler, Christie Clank by name, who had risen regularly through all the gradations of office, until the power of promotion could no farther go. His daughter, Kate Clank, was a celebrated beauty, and enjoyed a considerable extent of local reputation, independently of being a great favorite with the junior portion of the grand jury. Among the latter, however, there was one, a young squire of very libertine principles, named Deaker, whose suit to the fair Miss Clank proved more successful than those of his competitors, and the consequence was the appearance of young Val. The reader, therefore, already perceives that M'Clutchy's real name was Deaker; but perhaps he is not aware that, in the times of which we write, it was usual for young unmarried men of wealth not to suffer their illegitimate children to be named after them. There were, indeed, many reasons for this. In the first place, the mere fact of assuming the true name, was a standing argument of the father's profligacy. Secondly, the morals of the class and the period were so licentious, that the legitimate portion of a family did not like to be either outnumbered or insulted by their namesakes and illegitimate relatives, almost at every turn of the public roads. In the third place, a young man of this description could not, when seeking for a wife, feel the slightest inclination to have a living catalogue of his immoralities enumerated to her, under the names of Tom, or Dick, or Val so and so, all his children. This, of course, was an involuntary respect paid to modesty, and perhaps the strongest argument for suppressing the true name. The practice, however, was by no means universal; but in frequent instances it existed, and Val the Vulture's was one of them. He was named after neither father or mother, but after his grandmother, by the gaoler's side. Deaker would not suffer his name to be assumed; and so far as his mother was concerned, the general tenor of her life rendered the reminiscence of her's anything but creditable to her offspring. With respect to his education, Val's gratitude was principally due to his grandfather Clank, who had him well instructed. He himself, from the beginning, was shrewd, clever, and intelligent, and possessed the power, in a singular degree, of adapting himself to his society, whenever he felt it his interest to do so. He could, indeed, raise or depress his manners in a very surprising degree, and with an effort that often occasioned astonishment. On the other

hand, he was rapacious, unscrupulous, cowardly, and so vindictive that he was never known to forgive an injury. These are qualities to which, when you add natural adroitness and talent, you have such a character as has too frequently impressed itself, with something like the agreeable sensations produced by a red hot burning iron, upon the distresses, fears, and necessities of the Irish people.

M'Clutchy rose from the humble office of process-server to that of bailiff's follower, bailiff, head-bailiff, barony constable, until, finally, he felt himself a kind of factotum on the Castle Cumber property; and in proportion as he rose, so did his manners rise with him. For years before his introduction to our readers, he was the practical manager of the estate; and so judiciously did he regulate his own fortunes on it, that without any shameless or illegal breach of honesty, he actually contrived to become a wealthy man, and to live in a respectable manner. Much, however, will have more, and Val was rapacious. On finding himself comparatively independent, he began to take more enlarged, but still very cautious measures to secure some of the good things of the estate to him and his. This he was the better able to do, as he had, by the apparent candor of his manner, completely wormed himself into the full confidence of the head agent—a gentleman of high honor and integrity, remarkable alike for humanity and benevolence; but utterly without suspicion. Two or three farms, whose leases dropped, he most iniquitously took into his own hands, and so far wheedled the agent, that he induced that gentleman to think he was rendering a service to the property by doing so. The tenantry now began to murmur—a complaint came here, and another there—here was an instance of private and disguised oppression; and this was followed by a vindictive attempt to injure either the property or character of some one who had the courage to tell him what he thought of his conduct.

Val apprehending that he might be outborne by too powerful a mass of testimony, contrived just then, through his misrepretations to the agent, who still confided in him, and by the political influence of his father, the squire, who was the landlord's strongest electioneering supporter in the county, to get himself formally appointed under-agent. Feeling now quite confident in his strength, and that his hold on the prejudices, and, we may add, the ignorance of the absentee landlord, was as strong, if not stronger than those of the agent himself, he began to give a greater and less guarded scope to his natural principles. Mr. Hickman, the agent, had been strongly disgusted by the political profligacy with which the union was carried; and had, on more than one occasion, intimated a doubt whether, as an honest man, he could render political support to any one who had participated in its corruption or recognized the justice of those principles on which it had been carried. All this gave M'Clutchy that imperturbable insolence which is inseparable from petty tyranny and licensed extortion. Day after day did his character come out in all its natural deformity. The outcry against him was not now confined to this portion of the property, or that—it became pretty general; and, perhaps, at the time we have brought him on the stage, there was not a man in Ireland, holding the situation he did, who was more feared and more detested.

Some time previous to this, however, Hickman's eyes were opened to his undisguised character, and what he could do he did. On finding that the Vulture was reviving all the oppressive usages with which property in Ireland is so penally taxed, he immediately gave orders that such exactions should be discontinued by M'Clutchy, and resisted by the tenants. In spite of all this, however, there were upon the property many timid persons, who, dreading his malignity of purpose, still continued to yield to his avarice and rapacity, that which nothing else but a dread of his vengeance could extort from them. Thus did he feather his nest at the expense of their terrors.

Hickman, who had also been agent to old Tippertoe, felt a kind of personal attachment to that good-humored reprobate, so long as he believed him to be honest. Old Tom's venality, however, at the union, made him rather sick of the connection, and the conduct, or rather expensive profligacy of the young absentee Lord, rendered his situation, as an honest and humane agent, one of great pain to himself, considering his position between landlord and tenant.

He knew besides, that many men of his class had taken most scandalous advantages of the embarrassments which their dishonesty had occasioned in the affairs of their employers, and lent them their own rents in the moments of distress, in order to get a lien on their property. For this reason, and out of a feeling of honor and self-respect, Mr. Hickman had made it a point of principle to lend the young Lord no money under any circumstances. As far as he could legitimately, and within the ordinary calculations of humanity, feed Lord Cumber's prodigality of expenditure he did it. This, however, was not exactly the kind of agent

which his lordship wanted, and however highly he respected and honored him, still that direful word necessity goaded him into a forgetfulness of his own real interests, and of what was due to Hickman. He wanted an agent with less feeling, less scruple, less independence, and more of that accommodating principle which would yield itself to, and go down with, the impetuous current of his offensive vices, and satisfy their cravings even at his own ruin. Such, then, was M'Clutchy—such the position of Mr. Hickman, the agent—and such the general state of the Castle Cumber property. As to the principles and necessities of its proprietor, if they are not already known, we may assure our readers that they soon will be.

Constitution Cottage, M'Clutchy's residence, was, in fact, no cottage at all, as we have said, but a very respectable house, and of considerable size. Attached to it was an extensive yard and office houses, an excellent garden, orchard, pigeon house, and everything, in fact, that could constitute substantial comfort and convenience. It was situated beside a small clump of old beeches, that sheltered it from the north—to the front lay, at a few miles distance, a range of fine mountains—and between them stretched as rich a valley, both in fertility and beauty, as the eye of man could rest upon. The ground before the door fell by an easy and gradual descent, until a little further down it reached a green expanse of level meadow, through which a clear river wound its lingering course, as if loth to pass away from between the rich and grassy banks that enclosed it. It was, in fact, a spot of that calm and perfectly rural character which draws the heart unconsciously to the secret charm that rests upon it, and which even the casual traveler leaves behind him with regret. Some improvements were at the present time in an incipient state—such as plantations—garden walls—and what seemed the lines of an avenue, or approach to the house, which, by the way, stood in the centre of a farm that consisted of about eighty Irish acres.

At length a single knock came, which was given by O'Drive, for Hanlon, who was his assistant, durst not attempt such a thing in his presence; and if ever a knock conveyed the duplicity of the man who gave it, that did. Though, as we said, but a single one, yet there was no mistaking its double meaning. It was at once impudent and servile; it was impudent, as much as to say to the servants, "why don't you open the door quickly for a man who is so deep in your master's confidence as I am?" while to that master himself, it said, or seemed to say, "I am your creature, your instrument, your slave, ready to execute any oppression, any hardship, or villainy, on which you can employ me."

It is said, and we believe with truth, that in military life no officer is so severe and oppressive as he who has risen from the ranks, and been most obsequious there. We do not doubt it, for the principle is a strong one in human nature, and is by no means confined to either the army or navy. At all events, shuffling, and cringing, and slinking Darby O'Drive presented himself to Val the Vulture. There was a downcast, cowardly, shy, uneasy, expression in his blank, straggling features, that seemed to say, for God's sake spare my very life—don't annihilate me—here I am—you see through me—heart, spirit, and soul—body, lungs, and lights—could I tell *you* a lie? No. Could I deceive *you*—such a man as you, that can look through me as if I was a lanthorn, or a pane of glass without a bull's eye in it. No! only let me live and I'll do your bidding.

"Well," said Val, in a sharp, imperious tone, "you're punctual for a wonder."

"God be praised for that," replied Darby, wiping the top of his nose with the finger and thumb of an old mitten, "heaven be praised that I'm not late."

"Hold your damned canting tongue, you knave, what place is this for it?"

"Knave! well I am then."

"Yes, you know you are—you are all knaves—every bailiff is a knave—ahem—unless, indeed, one in a thousand."

"It's truth, indeed, plaise your honor."

"Not but there's worse than you after all, and be damned to you."

"An' betther, sir, too, i' you please, for sure, God help me, I'm not what I ought to be."

"Well, mend then, why don't you? for you want it. Come now, no jaw, I tell you, but answer me what I am about to ask you; not a word now."

"Well, no then, plaise your honor, I won't in throth."

"Did you warn the townland of Ballymackscud?"

"Yis, plaise your honor."

"Are they ready—have they the rent?"

"Only some o' them, sir,—an other some is axin' for time, the thieves."

"Who are asking for time?"

"Why the O'Shaughrans, sir—hopin', indeed, that your honor will let them wait till the markets rises, an' not be forced to sell the grain whin the prices is so low now that it would ruin them—but it's wondherful the onraisonableness of some people. Says I, 'his honor, Mr. M'Clutchy, is only doin' his

duty; but a betther hearted or a kinder man never bruk the world's bread than he is to them that desarves it at his hands;' so, sir, they began to—but—well, well, it's no matther—I tould them they were wrong—made it plain to them—but they wouldn't be convinced, say what I might."

"Why, what did they say, were they abusing me—I suppose so?"

"Och! the poor sowls, sure it was only ignorance and foolishness on their part—onraisonable cratures all or most of them is."

"Let me know at once what they said, you knave, or upon my honor and soul I'll turn you out of the room and bring in Hanlon."

"Plaise your honor, he wasn't present—I left him outside, in regard that I didn't think he was fit to be trust—a safe with—no matther, 'twas for a raison I had." He gave a look at M'Clutchy as he spoke, compounded of such far and distant cunning, scarcely perceptible—and such obvious, yet retreating cowardice, scarcely perceptible also—that no language could convey any notion of it.

"Ah!" said Val, "you are a neat lad—but go on—what *did* they say, for I must have it out of you."

"That I may die in happiness, your honor, but I'm afeard to tell you—but, sure, if you'd give your promise, sir—your bright word of honor, that you'd not pay me off for it, I'll tell you."

"Ah! you d——d crawling reptile, out with it—I won't pay you off."

"Well, then, here it is—oh! the curse o' Cromwell on them this day, for an ungrateful pack! they said, your honor, that—bad luck to them I pray—that there wasn't so black-hearted a scoundrel on the face of the airth as your four quarthers—that the gallows is gapin' for you—and that there's as many curses before you in hell as 'ud blisther a griddle."

M'Clutchy's face assumed its usual expression of diabolical malignity, whilst, at the same time, he gave a look so piercing at Darby, as if suspecting that the curse, from its peculiar character, was at least partially his own invention,—that the latter, who stood like a criminal, looking towards the floor, felt precisely what was going forward in the other's mind, and knew that he had nothing else for it but to look him steadily in the face, as a mark of his perfect innocence. Gradually, therefore, and slowly he raised his small gray eyes until they met those of M'Clutchy, and thus the gaze continued for nearly a minute between them, and that with such steadiness on both sides, that they resembled a mesmeric doctor and his patient, rather than anything else to which we could compare them. On the part of M'Clutchy the gaze was that of an inquisitor looking into the heart of him whom he suspected; on that of Darby, the eye, unconscious of evil, betrayed nothing but the purest simplicity and candor.

And yet, when we consider that Darby most unquestionably did not only ornament, but give peculiar point to the opinions expressed by the tenantry against the Vulture. perhaps we ought to acknowledge that of the two he possessed a larger share of histrionic talent.

At length M'Clutchy, whose eye, for reasons with which the reader is already acquainted, was never either a firm or a steady one, removed it from Darby, who nevertheless followed it with a simple but pertinacious look, as much as to say, I have told you truth, and am now waiting your leisure to proceed.

"What do you stare at?" said M'Clutchy, strongly disposed to vent his malignity on the next object to him; "and, you beggarly scoundrel, what did you say to that? Tell me, or I'll heave you, head foremost, through the window?"

"Why," replied Darby, in a quiet, confident, and insinuating tone, "I raisoned wid them—raisoned wid them like a Christian. 'Now, Sheemus O'Shaughran,' says I, 'you've said what I know to be a lie. I'm not the man to put ill between you and his honor, Mr. M'Clutchy, but at the same time,' says I, 'I'm his sarvint, and as an honest man I must do my duty. I don't intend to mintion a syllable of what you said this day; but as his sarvint, and gettin' bread through him, and undher him, I can't, nor I won't, suffer his honor to be backbitten before his own face—for it's next to that. Now,' says I, 'be guided by me, and all will be right. In the first place, you know, he's entitled to *duty-fowl**—in the next place, he's entitled to *duty-work*.' 'Ay, the landlord is,' said they, 'but not the Vul——' 'Whisht,' says I, in a friendly whisper, puttin' my hand across Dan's mouth, an' winkin' both my eyes at him; 'send his honor down a pair of them fine fat turkeys—I know his honor's fond o' them; but that's not all,' says I—'do you wish to have a friend in coort? I know you do. Well and good—he's drawing gravel to make a new avenue early next week, so, Sheemus O'Shaughran, if you wish to have *two* friends in coort—a great one and a little one'—manin' myself, God pardon me, for the little one, your honor—'you will,' says

* These were iniquitous exactions, racked from the poor tenantry by the old landlords or their agents.

"THEY SAY, YOUR HONOR, THAT—BAD LUCK TO THEM, I PRAY—THAT THERE WASN'T SO BLACK-HEARTED A SCOUNDREL ON THE FACE OF AIRTH AS YOUR FOUR QUARTERS."—*Val M'Clutchy*, chap. ii., p. 142.

I, 'early on next Monday mornin', send down a pair of horses and carts, and give him a week's duty work. Then,' says I, 'lave the rest to *somebody*, for I won't name names.'—No, your honor, I did'nt bring Hanlon in.—By the same token, as a proof of it, there's young Bandy Shaughran, the son, wid a turkey under aich arm, comin' up to the hall door."

"Well," proceeded M'Clutchy, without a single observation, "did you call on the Slevins?"

"Yes, sir; they're ready."

"The Magonnels?"

"Not ready, sir; but a pair of geese, and two men on next Thursday and Saturday. On Friday they must go to market to buy two *slips*."*

"Widow Gaffney?"

"Not ready, sir; but that I may never die in sin, a 'cute shaver."

"Why so—what did she say?"

"Oh, Mr. Hickman, sir, the head agent, your honor; that's the go. Throth, the same Mr. Hickman is—but, God forbid, sir, I'd spake a word against the absent; but any way, he's a good round thrifle, one way or the other, out of your pocket, from Jinny-warry to December."

"Darby, my good man, and most impertinent scoundrel, if you wish to retain your present situation, never open your lips against that excellent gentleman, Mr. Hickman. Mark my words—out you go, if I ever discover that you mention him with disrespect."

"Well, I won't then; and God forgive me for spakin' the truth—when it's not right."

"Did you see the Mulhollands?"

"Mr. Hickman again, sir, an' bad luck to ——— Beg pardon, sir, I forgot. Throth, sir, when I mentioned the duty work an' the new aveny, they fwhistled at you."

"Whistled at me!"

"Yes, sir; an' said that Mr. Hickman tould them to give you neither duty fowl nor duty work, but to do their own business, and let you do yours. Ay, and 'twas the same from all the rest."

"Well," said Val, going to the window and looking abroad for a minute or two,—"well—so much for Ballymackscud; now for its next neighbor, Ballymackfud."

"Mr. Hickman again, sir. The divil sweep the same Hickman, any way," said Darby, in an aside, which he knew the other could easily hear. "Out of the whole townland, sir, all I got was two men for the aveny—a goose from Barney Scadden, and her last hen, along wid half-a-dozen eggs, from that dacent creature, widow M'Murt. Throth four fine little childre she has, if they had anything on them, or anything to keep body and sowl together."

"You warned them all, of course?"

"Every sowl in the townland of Ballymackfud; and there's the upshot. But it's all Mr. Hickman, sir; for he tould them—'I will have none of this work,' says he; 'the tenants musn't be harrished and fleeshed in this manner,' says he. Yes, your honor, that's the upshot from Ballymackfud—two day's work—a sick goose (for I disremembered to mention that Barney said, wid a wink, that she'd require great attintion, as she was in a delicate state of health)—one ould hen, and a half-a-dozen eggs; which wouldn't be the case, only for Hickman—not but he's a very respectable gentleman—by all accounts."

"I told you before, sirra, that I will have nothing offensive to him mentioned in my presence. Give this letter to Mr. M'Slime, and bring me an answer as soon as you can. Will you have a glass of spirits?"

"Would it be intherfairin' wid my duty, sir?"

"If you think so, don't take it; you ought to know best."

"Well, then, for this one time, in regard of a *lhin-roe*,* or the red wather in my stomach, I'll try it. I drank bog-bine last night goin' to bed, but divil a morsel o' good it did me."

M'Clutchy handed him a full glass, which he held steadily before his eye, till the other put up the decanter.

"Your honor's health, sir," said he, "and fireside; and if you war to throw me out o' fifty windies, I'll add to that—here's wishin' that the divil had his own, and I know where *you'd* soon be."

"How, you villainous scoundrel," said Val, starting with rising wrath, "what do you mean by that?"

Darby made no reply, but hastily tossing off the glass, he seized his hat, bolted outside the door, and putting in his head, said in a kind of loud but confidential whisper—

"In Hickman's place, your honor!"

CHAPTER III.

Solomon M'Slime, a Religious Attorney—His Office—Family Devotions—Substitute for Breakfast—Misprision Blasphemy—Letter on Business.

Pass we now to another worthy character, who had locality upon the aforesaid property of Castle Cumber. Solomon M'Slime, the

* Young pigs.

* *Lhin-roe*, or red water—the Irish name for heart-burn.

law agent, was a satisfactory proof of the ease with which religion and law may meet and aid each other in the heart and spirit of the same person. An attorney, no doubt, is at all times an amiable, honest, and feeling individual, simply upon professional principles; but when to all this is added the benignant influence of serious and decided piety, it would not be an easy task to find, among the several classes which compose society in general, anything so truly engaging, so morally taintless, so sweetly sanctimonious, so seductively comely, as is that pure and evengelical exhibition of human character, that is found to be developed in a *religious* attorney.

Solomon M'Slime was a man in whose heart the two principles kept their constant residence; indeed so beautifully were they blended, that his law might frequently be mistaken for religion, just as his religion, on the other hand, was often known to smack strongly of law. In this excellent man, these principles accommodated each with a benignant indulgence, that manifested the beauty of holiness in a high degree. If, for instance, law in its progress presented to him any obstacle of doubtful morality, religion came forward with a sweet but serious smile, and said to her companion, "My dear friend, or sister, in this case *I* permit you." And on the contrary, if religion felt over sensitive or scrupulous, law had fifty arguments of safety, and precedent, and high authority to justify her. But, indeed, we may observe, that in a religious attorney these illiberal scruples do not often occur. Mr. M'Slime knew the advantages of religion too well, to feel that contraction of the mind and principles, which in so many ordinary cases occasions religion and common morality to become almost identical. Religion was to him a friend—a patroness in whose graces he stood so high, that she permitted him to do many things which those who were more estranged from her durst not attempt. He enjoyed that state of blessed freedom which is accorded to so few, and, consequently, had his "permissions" and his "privileges" to go in the wicked wayfares of this trying world much greater lengths than those who were less gifted and favored by the sweet and consoling principle which regulated and beautified his life.

Solomon was a small man, thin, sharp-featured, and solemn. He was deliberate in his manner and movements, and correct but slow of speech. Though solemn, however, he was not at all severe or querulous, as is too frequently the case with those who affect to be religious. Far from it. On the contrary, in him the gospel gifts appeared in a cheerful gravity of disposition, and a good-humored lubricity of temper, that could turn with equal flexibility and suavity to every incident of life, no matter how trying to the erring heart. All the hinges of his spirit seemed to have been graciously and abundantly oiled, and such was his serenity, that it was quite evident he had a light within him. It was truly a pleasure to speak to, or transact business with such a man, he seemed always so full of inward peace, and comfort, and happiness. Nay, upon some occasions, he could rise to a kind of sanctified facetiousness that was perfectly delightful, and in the very singleness of his heart, would, of an odd time, let out, easily and gently it is true, a small joke, that savored a good deal of secular humor.

Then he was so full of charity and affection for all that were frail and erring among our kind, that he never, or seldom, breathed a harsh word against the offender. Or if, in the fulness of his benevolence, he found it necessary to enumerate their faults, and place them, as it were, in a catalogue, it was done in a spirit of such love, mingled with sorrow, that those to whom he addressed himself, often thought it a pity that he himself did not honor religion, by becoming the offender, simply for the sake of afterwards becoming the patient.

In the religious world he was a very active and prominent man—punctual in his devotional exercises, and always on the lookout for some of those unfortunate brands with which society abounds, that he might, as he termed it, have the pleasure of plucking them out of the burning. He never went without a Bible and a variety of tracts in his pocket, and seldom was missed from the platform of a religious meeting. He received subscriptions for all public and private charities, and has repeatedly been known to offer and afford consolation to the widow and orphan, at a time when the pressure of business rendered the act truly one of Christian interest and affection.

The hour was not more than ten o'clock, A.M. when Darby entered his office, in which, by the way, lay three or four Bibles, in different places. In a recess on one side of the chimney-piece, stood a glass-covered book-case, filled with the usual works on his profession, whilst hung upon the walls, and consequently nearer observation, were two or three pensile shelves, on which were to be found a small collection of religious volumes, tracts, and other productions, all bearing on the same subject. On the desk was a well-thumbed Bible to the right, which was that used at family prayer; and on the opposite side, a religious almanack and a copy of congregation hymns.

Darby, on reaching the hall door, knocked with considerable more decision than he had done at M'Clutchy's, but without appearing to have made himself heard; after waiting patiently for some time, however, he knocked again, and at length the door was opened by a very pretty servant girl, about seventeen, who, upon his inquiring if her master was at home, replied in a sighing voice, and with a demure face, "Oh, yes—at family prayer."

"When he's done," said Darby, "maybe you'd be kind enough to say that Darby O'Drive has a message for him."

The pretty servant did not nod—an act which she considered as too flippant for the solemnity of devotion—but she gently bowed her head, and closed her eyes in assent—upon which was heard a somewhat cheerful groan, replete with true unction, inside the parlor, followed by a voice that said, "ah, Susannah!" pronounced in a tone of grave but placid remonstrance; Susannah immediately entered, and the voice, which was that of our attorney, proceeded—"Susannah take your place—long measure, eight lines, four eights, and two sixes." The psalm was then raised or pitched by Solomon himself, who was followed by six or eight others, each in a different key, but all with such reluctance to approach their leader, that from a principle of unworthiness, they allowed him, as the more pious, to get far in advance of them. In this manner they sang two verses, and it was remarkable, that although on coming to the conclusion, Solomon was far ahead, and the rest nowhere, yet, from the same principle of unworthiness, they left the finish, as they did the start, altogether to himself. The psalm was accordingly wound up by a kind of understanding or accompaniment between his mouth and nose, which seemed each moved by a zealous but godly struggle to excel the other, if not in melody at least in loudness. They then all knelt down, and Solomon launched, with a sonorous voice, into an extempore prayer, which was accompanied by a solemn commentary of groanings, sighings, moanings, and muffled ejaculations, that cannot otherwise be described except by saying that they resembled something between a screech and a scream.

Their devotions being over, Darby, having delivered M'Clutchy's letter, was desired to take a seat in the office, until Mr. M'Slime should be at leisure to send a reply.

"Sit down, my good friend, Darby, sit down, and be at ease, at least in your body; I do not suffer any one who has an immortal soul to be saved to stand in my office—and as you have one to be saved, Darby, you must sit. The pride of this vain life is our besetting sin, and happy are they who are enabled to overcome it—may He be praised!—sit down."

"I'm thankful to you, sir," said Darby, "oh, thin, Mr. M'Slime, it would be well for the world if every attorney in it was like you, sir—there would be little honesty goin' asthray, sir, if there was."

"Sam Sharpe, my dear boy, if you have not that bill of costs finished—"

"No sir."

"A good boy, Sam—well, do not omit thirteen and four pence for two letters, which I ought to have sent—as a part of my moral, independently of my professional duty—to Widow Lenehan, having explained to her by word of mouth, that which I ought in conscience, to have written—but indeed my conscience often leads me to the—what should I say?—the merciful side in these matters. No, Darby, my friend, you cannot see into my heart, or you would not say so—I am frail, Darby, and sinful—I am not up to the standard, my friend, neither have I acted up to my privileges—the freedom of the gospel is a blessed thing, provided we abuse it not—well, Sam, my good young friend—"

"That was entered before, sir, under the head of instructions."

"Very right—*apparently* very right, Sam, and reasonable for you to think so—but this was on a different occasion, although the same case."

"Oh, I beg pardon, sir, I did not know that."

"Sam, do not beg pardon—not of me—nor of any but One—go there, Sam, you require it; we all require it, at least I do abundantly. Darby, my friend, it is a principle with me never to lose an opportunity of throwing in a word in season—but as the affairs of this life must be attended to—only in a secondary degree, I admit—I will, therefore, place you at the only true fountain where you can be properly refreshed. Take this Bible, Darby, and it matters not where you open it, read and be filled."

Now, as Darby, in consequence of his early attendance upon M'Clutchy, had been obliged to leave home that morning without his breakfast, it must be admitted that he was not just then in the best possible disposition to draw much edification from it. After poring over it with a very sombre face for some time, he at length looked shrewdly at M'Slime closing one eye a little, as was his custom; "I beg pardon, sir," said he, "but if I'm not mistaken this book I believe is intended more for the sowl than the body."

"For the body! truly, Darby, that last is a carnal thought, and I am sorry to hear it from your lips:—the Bible is a spiritual book, my friend, and spiritually must it be received."

"But, to a man like me, who hasn't had his breakfast to-day yet, how will it be sarviceable? will reading it keep off hunger or fill my stomach?"

"Ah! Darby, my friend, that is gross talk—such views of divine truth are really a perversion of the gifts of heaven. That book although it will not fill your stomach, as you grossly call it, actually will do it figuratively, which in point of fact is the same thing, or a greater—it will enable you to bear hunger as a dispensation, Darby, to which it is your duty as a Christian to submit. Nay, it will do more, my friend; it will exalt your faith to such a divine pitch, that if you read it with the proper spirit, you will pray that the dispensation thus laid on you may continue, in order that the inner man may be purged."

"Faith, and Mr. M'Slime, with great respect, if that is your doctrine it isn't your practice. The sorra word of prayer—God bless the prayers!—came out o' your lips today, antil you laid in a good warm breakfast, and afther that, for fraid of disappointments, the very first thing you prayed for was your daily bread—didn't I hear you? But I'll tell you what, sir, ordher me my breakfast, and then I'll be spakin' to you. A hungry man—or a hungry woman, or her hungry childre' can't eat Bibles; although it is well known, God knows, that when hunger, and famine, and starvation are widin them and upon them, that the same Bible, but nothing else, is handed to them by pious people in the shape of consolation and relief. Now I'm thinkin', Mr. M'Slime, that that is not the best way to make the Bible respected. Are you goin' to give me my breakfast, sir? upon my sowl, beggin' your pardon, if you do I'll bring the Bible home wid me, if that will satisfy you, for we haven't got e'er a one in our own little cabin."

"Sharpe, my good boy, I'll trouble you to take that Bible out of his hands. I am not in the slightest degree offended, Darby—you will yet, I trust, live to know better, may He grant it! I overlook the misprision of blasphemy on your part, for you didn't know what you said? but you will, you will.

"This is a short reply to Mr. M'Clutchy's note. I shall see him on my way to the sessions to-morrow, but I have told him so in it. And now, my friend, be assured I overlook the ungodly and carnal tenor of your conversation—we are all frail and prone to erfor; I, at least, am so—still we must part as Christians ought, Darby. You have asked me for a breakfast, but I overlook that also—I ought to overlook it as a Christian; for is not your immortal soul of infinitely greater value than your perishable body? Undoubtedly—and as a proof that I value it more, receive this—this, my brother sinner—oh! that I could say my brother Christian also!—receive it, Darby, and in the proper spirit too; it is a tract written by the Rev. Vesuvius M'Slug, entitled 'Spiritual Food for Babes of Grace;' I have myself found it graciously consolatory and refreshing, and I hope that you also may, my friend."

"Begad, sir," said Darby, "it may be very good in its way, and I've no doubt but it's a very generous and Christian act in you to give it—espishilly since it cost you nothing—but for all that, upon my sowl, I'm strongly of opinion that to a hungry man it's a bad substitute for a breakfast."

"Ah! by the way, Darby," lending a deaf ear to this observation, "have you heard, within the last day or two, anything of Mr. M'Clutchy's father, Mr. Deaker—how he is?"

"Why, sir," replied Darby, "I'm tould he's breaking down fast, but the divil a one of him will give up the lady. Parsons, and ministers, and even priests, have all been at him; but it is useless: he curses and damns them right and left, and won't be attended by any one but her—hadn't *you* betther try him, Mr. M'Slime? May be you might succeed. Who knows but a little of the 'Spiritual Food for Babes of Grace' might sarve him as well as others. There's a case for you. Sure he acknowledges himself to be a member of the hell-fire club!"

"He's a reprobate, my friend—impenitent, hopeless. I have myself tried him, spoke with him, reasoned with him, but never was my humility, my patience, so strongly tried. His language I will not repeat—but canting knave, hypocrite, rascal attor—no, it is useless and unedifying to repeat it. Now go, my friend, and do not forget that precious tract which you have thrust so disrespectfully into your pocket."

Darby, after a shrewd wink at one of the apprentices, which was returned, passed out, and left Mr. M'Slime to the pursuit of his—salvation.

In the mean time, as we authors have peculiar "privileges," as Mr. M'Slime would say, we think it only due to our readers to let them have a peep at M'Slime's note to our friend Valentine M'Clutchy.

"My dear friend—I felt as deep an interest in the purport of your note as you yourself possibly could. The parties alluded to I appreciate precisely as you do—M'Loughlin has in the most unchristian manner assailed my character as well as yours. So has his partner in the concern—I mean Harman. But then, my friend, are we not Christians, and shall we not return good for evil? *Shall we not forgive them?* Some whispers, hints, very gentle and delicate,

have reached my ears, which I do not wish to commit to paper;—but this I may say, until I see you to-morrow, that I think your intentions with respect to M'Loughlin and Harman are premature. There is a screw loose somewhere, so to speak, that is all—but I believe, I can say, that if your father, Deaker, will act to our purposes, all will be as we could wish. This is a delicate subject, my dear friend, but still I am of opinion that if you could, by any practicable means, soften the unfortunate female who possesses such an ascendancy over him, all will be right. I would, myself, undertake the perilous task for your sake—and perilous to ordinary men I admit it would be, for she is beyond question exceedingly comely. In me this would appear disinterested, whilst in you, suspicion would become strong. Cash is wanted in the quarter you know, and cash has been refused in another quarter, and when we meet I shall tell you more about this matter. In the mean time it is well that there is no legitimate issue—but should he will his property to this Delilah, or could she be removed?—I mean to a local distance. But I shall see you to-morrow (D.V.), when we can have freer conversation upon what may be done. With humble but sincere prayers for your best wishes and welfare,

I am, my dear friend,
Thine in the bonds of Christian love,
SOLOMON M'SLIME.

P. S.—As it is a principle of mine to neglect no just opportunity of improving my deceitful heart, I bought from a travelling pedlar this morning, a book with the remarkable title of "The Spiritual Attorney, or A Sure Guide to the Other World.' I have not yet had time to look at anything but the title page, and consequently am not able to inform you *which* of the worlds he alludes to, ha, ha! You see, my friend, I do not think there is evil in a joke that is harmless, or has a moral end in view, as every joke ought to have.

Thine as before,
SOL. M'SLIME."

CHAPTER IV.

Poll Doolin, the Child Cadger—Raymond, her Son—Short Dialogue on the Times—Poll's Opinion on the Causes of Immorality—Solomon is Generous—A Squire of the Old School—And a Moral Dialogue.

THE next morning was that on which the Quarter Sessions of Castle Cumber commenced; and of course it was necessary for Darby O'Drive, who was always full of business on such occasions, to see M'Clutchy, in order to receive instructions touching his duties on various proceedings connected with the estate. He had reached the cross-roads that ran about half-way between Constitution Cottage and Castle Cumber, when he met, just where the road turned to M'Clutchy's, a woman named Poll Doolin, accompanied, as she mostly was, by her son—a poor, harmless, idiot, named Raymond; both of whom were well known throughout the whole parish. Poll was a thin, sallow woman, with piercing dark eyes, and a very gipsy-like countenance. Her dress was always black, and very much worn; in fact, everything about her was black—black stockings, black bonnet, black hair, and black kerchief. Poll's occupation was indeed a singular one, and not very creditable to the morals of the day. Her means of living were derived from the employment of child-cadger to the Foundling Hospital of Dublin. In other words, she lived by conveying illegitimate children from the places of their birth to the establishment just mentioned, which has been very properly termed a bounty for national immorality. Whenever a birth of this kind occurred, Poll was immediately sent for—received her little charge with a name—whether true or false mattered not—pinned to its dress—then her traveling expenses; after which she delivered it at the hospital, got a receipt for its delivery, and returned to claim her demand, which was paid only on her producing it. In the mean time, the unfortunate infant had to encounter all the comforts of the establishment, until it was drafted out to a charter school, in which hot-bed of pollution it received that exquisitely moral education that enabled it to be sent out into society admirably qualified to sustain the high character of Protestantism.

"Morrow, Poll," said Darby; "what's the youngest news wid you? And Raymond, my boy, how goes it wid you?"

"I don't care for you," replied the fool; "you drove away Widow Branagan's cow, an' left the childre to the black wather. Bad luck to you!"

Darby started; for there is a superstition among the Irish, that the curse of an "innocent" is one of the most unlucky that can be uttered.

"Don't curse *me*," replied Darby; "sure, Raymond, I did only my duty."

"Then who made you do your duty?" asked the other.

"Why, Val the Vul—hem—Mr. M'Clutchy, to be sure."

"Bad luck to *him* then!"

His mother, who had been walking a little before him, turned, and, rushing towards him, put her hand hastily towards his mouth, with the obvious intention of suppressing the imprecation; but too late; it had escaped, and be the consequence what it might, Val had got the exciting cause of it.

"My poor unfortunate boy," said she, "you oughtn't to curse anybody; stop this minute, and say God bless him."

"God bless who?"

"Mr. McClutchy."

"The devil bless him! ha, ha, ha! Doesn't he harry the poor, an' drive away their cows from them—doesn't he rack them an' rob them—harry them, rack them, rob them—

"Harry them, rack them, rob them,
Rob them, rack them, harry them—
Harry them, rack them, rob them,
Rob them, rack them, harry them."

This he sung in an air somewhat like "Judy Callahan."

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh the devil bless him! and they say a blessin' from the devil is very like a curse from God."

The mother once more put up her hands to his face, but only with the intention of fondling and caressing him. She tenderly stroked down his head, and patted his cheek, and attempted to win him out of the evil humor into which the sight of Darby had thrown him. Darby could observe, however, that she appeared to be deeply troubled by the idiot's conduct, as was evident by the trembling of her hands, and a perturbation of manner which she could not conceal.

"Raymond," she said, soothingly, "won't you be good for me, darlin'—for your own mother, my poor helpless boy? Won't you be good for me?"

"I will," said he, in a more placid voice.

"And you will not curse anybody any more?"

"No, mother, no."

"And won't you bless Mr. M'Clutchy, my dear child?"

"There's a fig for him," he replied—"there's a fig for him. Now!"

"But you didn't bless him, my darlin'—you didn't bless him yet."

As she spoke the words, her eye caught his, and she perceived that it began to gleam and kindle.

"Well no," said she hastily; "no, I won't ask you; only hould your tongue—say no more."

She again patted his cheek tenderly, and the fiery light which began to burn in his eye, died gradually away, and no other expression remained in it but the habitual one of innocence and good-nature.

"No, no," said she, shaking her head, and speaking as much to herself as to Darby; "I know him too well; no earthly power will put him out of his own way, once he takes it into his head. This minute, if I had spoke another word about the blessin', Mr. M'Clutchy would a got another curse; yet, except in these fits, my poor child is kindness and tendherness itself."

"Well now," said Darby, "that that's over, can you tell me, Poll, what's the news? When were you in Dublin?"

"I've given that up," replied Poll; "I'm too ould and stiff for it now. As for the news, you ought to know what's goin' as well as I do. You're nearly as much on the foot."

"No; nor if every head in the parish was 'ithin side o'mine, I wouldn't know as much in the news line as you, Poll."

"The news that's goin' of late, Darby, is not good, an' you know it. There's great grumlin' an' great complaints, ever since Val, the lad, became undher agent; and you know that too."

"But how can I prevent that?" said Darby; "sure I'd side wid the people if I could."

"You'd side wid the people, an' you'd side wid the man that oppresses them, even in spite of Mr. Hickman."

"God bless Mr. Hickman!" said Raymond, "and the divil curse him! and sure 'tis well known that the divil's curse is only another name for God's blessin'. God bless, Mr. Hickman!"

"Amen, my darlin' child, wid all my heart," said Poll; "but, Darby," she continued, "take my word for it, that these things won't end well. The estate and neighborhood was peaceable and quiet till the Vulture began his pranks, and now——"

"Very well," said Darby, "the blame be his, an' if it comes to that, the punishment; so far as myself's consarned, I say, let every herrin' hang by its own tail—*I* must do my duty. But tell me, Poll—hut, woman, never mind the Vulture—let him go to the devil his own way—tell me do you ever hear from your son Frank, that Brian M'Loughlin sent acrass?"

"No," said she, "not a word; but the curse o' heaven on Brian M'Loughlin! Was my fine young man worth no more than his garran of a horse, that he didn't steal either, till he was put to it by the Finigans."

"Well, sure two o' them were sent over soon afther him, if that's any comfort."

"It's no comfort," replied Poll, "but I'll tell you what's a comfort, the thought that I'll never die till I have full revenge on Brian M'Loughlin—ay, either on him or his—or both. Come, Raymond, have you ne'er a

spare curse now for Brian M'Loughlin?—you could give a fat one to M'Clutchy this minute—and have you none for Brian M'Loughlin?"

"No," replied the son, "he doesn't be harryin' the poor."

"Well, but he transported your brother."

"No matter; Frank used to beat me—he was bad, an Brian M'Loughlin was good to me, and does be good to me; he gives me my dinner or breakfast whenever I go there—an' a good bed in the barn. I won't curse him. Now!"

"It's no use," continued Poll, whose thin features had not yet subsided from the inflammatory wildness of expression which had been awakened by the curse, "it's no use, he'll only do what he likes himself, an' the best way is to never heed him."

"I believe so," said Darby, "but where's your daughter Lucy now, Poll?"

"Why," said Poll, "she has taken to my trade, an' thravels up to the Foundling; although, dear knows, it's hardly worth her while now—it won't give her salt to her kale, poor girl."

"Why, are the times mendin'?" asked Darby, who spoke in a moral point of view.

"Mendin'!" exclaimed Poll, "oh, ay indeed—Troth they're not fit to be named in the one day with what they used to be. But indeed, of late I'm happy to say that they *are* improvin' a bit," said she, speaking professionally. "M'Clutchy's givin' them a lift, for I've ever an' always remarked, that distress, and poverty, and neglect o' the poor, and hardship, and persecution, an' oppression, and anything that way, was sure to have my very heart broke wid business."

"And tell me, Poll, did you ever happen to get a job from a sartin pious gentleman, o' the name of M'Slime?—now tell the truth."

"It's a question," replied Poll, "you have no right to axe—you must know, Darby O'Drive, that I've had my private business, as well as my public business, an' that I'd suffer that right hand to be cut off sooner than betray trust. Honor bright, or what's the world good for!"

They now reached a spot where the road branched into two, but Poll still kept to that which led to M'Clutchy's. "Are you for the Cottage too," asked Darby.

"I am," replied Poll, "I've been sent for; but what he wants wid me, I know no more than the man in the moon."

Just then the tramp of a horse's feet was heard behind them, and in a minute or two, Solomon M'Slime, who was also on his way to the Cottage, rode up to them.

"A kind good morning to you, Darby, my friend! I trust you did not neglect to avail yourself of the—Ah!" said he complacently, on catching a glimpse of Poll's face, "I think I ought to recollect your features, my good woman—but, no—I can't say I do—No, I must mistake them for those of another—but, indeed, the best of us is liable to mistake and error—all frail—flesh is grass."

"You might often see my face," returned Poll, "but I don't think ever we spoke before. I know you to look at you, sir, that's all—an' it's thrue what you say too, sir, there's nothing but frailty in the world—divil a much else—howsomever, be that as is may, honor bright's my motive."

"And a good motto it is, my excellent woman—is that interesting young man your son?"

"He is, sir; but he's a poor innocent that hasn't the full complement of wit, sir, God help him!"

"Well, my good woman," continued Solomon, "as he appears to be without shoes to his feet, will you accept of five shillings, which is all the silver I have about me, to buy him a pair."

"Many thanks, Mr. M'Sl-hem—many thanks, sir; honor bright's my motive."

"And let it always be so, my excellent woman; a good morning to you very kindly! Darby, I bid you also good morning, and peace be with you both."

So saying, he rode on at a quiet, easy amble, apparently at peace with his heart, his conscience, his sleek cob, and all the world besides.

The sessions of Castle Cumber having concluded as sessions usually conclude, we beg our reader to accompany us to Deaker Hall, the residence of M'Clutchy's father, the squire. This man was far advanced in years, but appeared to have been possessed of a constitution which sustains sensuality, or perhaps that retrospective spirit which gloats over its polluted recollections, on the very verge of the grave. In the case before us, old age sharpened the inclination to vice in proportion as it diminished the power of being vicious, and presented an instance of a man, at the close of a long life, watching over the grave of a corrupted heart, with a hope of meeting the wan spectres of his own departed passions, since he could not meet the passions themselves; and he met them, for they could not rest, but returned to their former habitation, like unclean spirits as they were, each bringing seven more along with it, but not to torment him. Such were the beings with which the soul of this aged materialist was crowded. During life his well known motto was, "let us eat, and drink,

and be merry, for to-morrow we die." Upon this principle, expanded into still wider depravity, did he live and act during a protracted existence, and to those who knew him, and well known he was, there appeared something frightfully revolting in the shameless career of this impenitent old infidel.

Deaker was a large man, with a rainbow protuberance before, whose chin, at the time we speak of, rested upon his breast, giving to him the exact character which he bore—that of a man who to the last was studious of every sensual opportunity. His gray, goatish eye, was vigilant and circumspect, and his under lip protruded in a manner, which, joined to the character of his age, left no one at a loss for the general subject matter of his thoughts. He always wore top-boots, and generally went on horseback, having that part of his hat which rested on the collar of his coat, turned up and greasy.

Squire Deaker's language was not more moral than his life—for he not only enforced his principles by his example, but also by his precept. His conversation consequently resolved itself into a mingled stream of swearing and obscenity. Ridicule of religion, and a hardened triumph in his own iniquitous exploits, illustrated and confirmed by a prodigality of blasphemous asservations, constituted the staple of his thoughts and expressions. According to his own principles he could not look forward to another life, and consequently all that remained for him was to look back upon an unbroken line of seduction and profligacy—upon wealth and influence not merely abused, but prostituted to the lowest and grossest purposes of our worst passions—upon systematic crime—unmanly treachery—and that dishonest avarice which constituted the act of heartless desertion in himself the ultimate ruin and degradation of his victims. Such was this well known squire of the old school, whose portrait, taken from life, will be recognized by every one who ever knew him, should any such happen to peruse these pages.

At the period of which we write Squire Deaker was near eighty, and although feeble and broken down, he still exhibited the remains of a large, coarse, strong-boned animal, not without a vigorous twinkle of low cunning in his eye, and a duplicity of character and principle about his angular and ill-shaped eye-brows which could not be mistaken. He was confined to his bed, and for the first time during many years, was unable to attend the Castle Cumber quarter sessions.

It was the second or third day after their close that about the hour of ten o'clock, A.M., he awoke from a heavy and unhealthy doze, which could scarcely be termed sleep, but rather a kind of middle state between that and waking. At length he raised his head, gasped, and on finding no one in the room, he let fly a volley of execrations, and rang the bell.

"Is there any one there? Any one within hearing? I say Isabel, Isabel, Jezabel, are you all dead and d——d?"

"No, your honor, not yet—some of us at least," replied a shrewd-looking lad of about eighteen, making his appearance.

"Ha, Lanty—it's you, is it? What do you mean by that, you devil's pick-tooth? Where's Isabel? Where's Jezabel? Playing her pranks, I suppose—where is she, you devil's tooth-brush? eh?"

"Do you want your brandy and wather, sir?"

"Brandy and h—l, you scoundrel! Where's Miss Fuzzle?"

"Why, she's just rinsing her mouth, sir, wid a drop of"—

"Of what, you devil's imp; but I know—she's drinking—she's drunk, you young candidate for perdition?"

"I'm not an ould one, sir, any how; as to Miss Fuzzle, sir, she bid me say, that she's doin' herself the pleasure of drinkin' your health"—

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, if I were near her—that's all! drinking my health! She's tipsy, the she scoundrel, she never sends me that message unless when she's tipsy"—

"Not tipsy, your honor, only unwell—she's a little touched wid the falling sickness—she always takes it after rinsing her mouth, sir; for she's fond of a sweet breath, your honor."

"Ah, she's a confounded blackguard—a living quicksand, and nothing else. Lanty, my lad, if the Mississippi was brandy grog, she'd dry the river—drinking at this hour!—well, never mind, I was drunk myself last night, and I'm half drunk yet. Here, you devil's tinder box, mix me a glass of brandy and water."

"Wouldn't you do it better yourself, sir?"

"No, you whelp, don't you see how my hands, and be hanged to them, tremble and shake. Put in another glass, I say—carry it to my mouth now; hold, you croil—here's the glorious, pious, and immortal memory! Ho! Lanty, there's nothing like being a good Protestant after all—so I'll stand to glorious Bill, to the last; nine times nine, and one cheer more! hurra!"

He then laid himself back, and attempted to whistle the Boyne Water, but having only one tusk in front, the sound produced resembled the wild whistle of the wind through the chink of a door—shrill and monotonous;

after which he burst out into a chuckling laugh, tickled, probably, at the notion of that celebrated melody proving disloyal in spite of him, as refusing, as it were, to be whistled.

At this moment Miss Isabel, or as he most frequently called her Miss Jezabel Fuzzle, came in with a gleaming eye and an unsteady step—her hair partially dishevelled, and her dress most negligently put on. The moment Deaker saw her, his whole manner changed, notwithstanding his previous violence—the swagger departed from him, his countenance fell, and he lay mute and terror-stricken before her. It was indeed clear that her sway over him was boundless, and such was the fact. On this occasion she simply looked at him significantly, held up her hand in a menacing attitude, and having made a mock curtesy, immediately left the room.

"Lanty," said he in an undertone, when she had gone, "Lanty, you clip, go and tell her to forgive me; I said too much, and I'm sorry for it, say—go you scoundrel."

"Faix I'll do no such thing, sir," replied Lanty, alarmed at the nature of the message; "I know better than to come across her *now;* she'd whale the life out o' me. Sure she's afther flailing the cook out o' the kitchen—and Tom Corbet the butler has one of his ears, he says, hangin' off him as long as a blood-hound's."

"Speak easy," said Deaker, in a voice of terror, "speak lower, or she may hear you—Isn't it strange," he said to himself, "that I who never feared God or man, should quail before this Jezabel!"

"Begad, an' here's one, your honor, that'll make *her* quail, if he meets her."

"Who is it," asked the other eagerly, "who is it you imp?"

"Why, Mr. M'Clutchy, sir; he's ridin' up the avenue."

"Ay, Val the Vulture—Val the Vulture—I like that fellow—I like him for his confoundedly clever roguery; only he's a hypocrite, and doesn't set the world at defiance as I do;—no, he's a cowardly, skulking hypocrite, nearly as great a one as M'Slime, but doesn't talk so much about religion as that oily gentleman."

In a few moments M'Clutchy entered.

"Good morrow, Val. Well, Val—well, my Vulture, what's in the wind now? Who's to suffer? Are you ready for a pounce? Eh?"

"I was sorry to hear that your health's not so good, sir, as it was."

"You lie, my dear Vulture, you lie in your throat, I tell you. You're watching for my carcase, snuffing the air at a distance under the hope of a gorge. No—you didn't care the devil had me, provided you could make a haul by it."

"I hope, sir, there's no——"

"Hope! You rascally hypocrite, what's hope good for? Hope to rot in the grave is it? To melt into corruption and feed the worms? What a precious putrid carcase I'll make, when I'm a month in the dirt. Maybe you wouldn't much relish the scent of me then, my worthy Vulture. Curse your beak, at all events! what do you want? what did you come for?"

Val, who knew his worthy sire well, knew also the most successful method of working out any purpose with him. He accordingly replied, conscious that hypocrisy was out of the question—

"The fact is, sir, I want you to aid me in a piece of knavery."

"I'll do it—I'll do it. Hang me if I don't. Come—I like that—it shows that there's no mock modesty between us—that we know one another. What's the knavery?"

"Why, sir, I'm anxious, in the first place, to have Hickman, the head agent, out, and in the next, to get into his place, if possible. Now, I know that you can assist me in both, if you wish."

"How?" asked Deaker, who was quite as able a tactician as his son; and who, in fact, had contrived to put himself so completely in possession of the political influence of the county as to be able to return any one he wished. "How is it to be done? Tell me that?"

"I have understood from George Gamble, Lord Cumber's own man, that he wants money."

"Tut," replied Deaker, who now forgot a great deal of his swearing, and applied himself to the subject, with all the coolness and ability of a thorough man of business. "Tut, Val, is that your news? When was he ever otherwise? Come to the point; the thing's desirable—but how can it be done?"

"I think it can; but it must be by very nice handling indeed."

"Well—your nice handling then?"

"The truth is, that Hickman, I suspect, is almost sick of the agency—thanks to Lord Cumber's extravagance, and an occasional bit of blister which I, through the tenantry, lay on him at home. Cumber, you know, is an unsteady scoundrel, and in the ordinary transactions of life, has no fixed principle, for he is possessed of little honor, and I am afraid not much honesty."

"Oh murder! this from Val the Vulture! Let me look at you! Did M'Slime bite you? or have you turned Methodist? Holy Jupiter, what a sermon! Curse your beak, sir; go on, and no preaching."

"Not much honesty as I said. Now, sir, if you, who have him doubly in your power

—first, by the mortgage; and, secondly, as his political godfather, who can either put him in, or keep him out of the country—if you were to write him a friendly, confidential letter, in which, observe, you are about to finally arrange your affairs; and you are sorry—quite sorry—but the truth is, something must be done about the mortgage—you are very sorry—mark—but you are old, and cannot leave your property in an unsettled state. Just touch that part of it so——"

"Yes—touch and go."

"Exactly—touch and go. Well, you pass then to the political portion of it. Hickman's political opinions are not well known, or at least doubtful. Indeed you have reason to believe that he will not support his lordship or his family—is not in the confidence of government—displeased at the Union—and grumbles about corruption. His lordship is abroad you know, and cannot think for himself. You speak as his friend—his tried friend—he ought to have a man on his property who is staunch, can be depended on, and who will see that full justice is done him in his absence. Hickman, too, is against Ascendancy principles. Do you see, sir?"

"Proceed—what next?"

"Why, we stop there for the present; nothing more can be done until we hear from the scoundrel himself."

"And what do you imagine will be the upshot?"

"Why, I think it not at all unlikely that he will place himself and his interests, pecuniary and political, altogether in your hands, and consequently you will probably have the guiding of him."

"Well, Val, you are an able knave to be sure; but never mind; I like you all the better. The true doctrine is always—*eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow you die*—take as much out of life and your fellow-men as you can. There's no knavery in the grave, my Vulture. There the honest man and the knave are alike; and this being the case, what the devil is public opinion worth?"

"It's worth a great deal if we use it for our own purposes while we're here; otherwise I agree with you that it's valueless in itself."

"You're a cursed clever fellow, Val, an able knave, as I said—but I don't like your son; he's a dishonest blockhead, and I needn't tell you that the man who has not brains enough to be dishonest is a most contemptible scoundrel."

"Are you not able to get up?" asked Val, in a very dutiful and affectionate voice.

"Able enough now, but my head swam a while ago at a deuced rate. I was drunk, as usual, last night, and could do nothing, not even put a tumbler to my mouth, until I took a stiff glass of brandy and water, and that has set me up again. When shall I write to young Topertoe, the Cumber blade?"

"The sooner the better, now; but I think you ought to rise and take some exercise."

"So I shall, immediately, and to-morrow I write then, according to your able instructions, most subtle and sagacious Val. Are you off?"

"Yes, good-bye, sir, and many thanks."

"None of your stuff I say, but be off out of this—" and as he spoke Val disappeared.

So far the first steps for ousting Mr. Hickman were taken by this precious father and his equally valuable son. Val, however, entertained other speculations quite as ingenious, and far more malignant in their tendency. Hickman, of course, he might, by undercurrents and manœuvering, succeed in ejecting from the agency; but he could not absolutely ruin him. Nothing short of this, however, did he propose to himself, so far as M'Loughlin, and, we may add, every one connected with him, was concerned; for M'Clutchy possessed that kind of economy in his moral feelings, that always prompted him to gratify his interest and his malice by the same act of virtue. How he succeeded in this benevolent resolution, time and the progress of this truthful history will show.

CHAPTER V.

Description of a Summer Evening—A Mysterious Meeting—A Jealous Vision—Letter from Squire Deaker to Lord Cumber—Lord Cumber's Reply.

The season was now about the close of May, that delightful month which presents the heart and all our purer sensations with a twofold enjoyment; for in that sweet period have we not all the tenderness and delicacy of spring, combined with the fuller and more expanded charms of the leafy summer—like that portion of female life, in which the eye feels it difficult to determine whether the delicate beauty of the blushing girl, or the riper loveliness of the full grown maid, predominates in the person. The time was evening, about half an hour before that soft repose of twilight, in which may be perceived the subsiding stir of busy life as it murmurs itself into slumber, after the active pursuits of day. On a green upland lawn, that was a sheep walk, some portions of which were studded over with the blooming and fragrant furze, stood an old ecclesiastical ruin, grey

from time, and breathing with that spirit of vague but dreamy reverie, which it caught from the loveliness of the season, the calmness and the golden light of the hour, accessories, that, by their influence, gave a solemn beauty to its very desolation. It reminded one somewhat of the light which coming death throws upon the cheek of youth when he treacherously treads in the soft and noiseless steps of decline—or rather of that still purer light, which, when the aged Christian arrives at the close of a well spent life, accompanied by peace, and hope, and calmness, falls like a glory on his bed of death. The ruin was but small, a remnant of one of those humble, but rude temples, in which God was worshipped in simplicity and peace, far from the noisy tumults and sanguinary conflicts of ambitious man.

Through this sweet upland, and close to the ruin, ran a footpath that led to a mountain village of considerable extent. Immediately behind the ruin stood a few large hawthorn trees, now white with blossoms, whose fragrance made the very air a luxury, and from whose branches came forth those gushes of evening melody that shed tenderness and tranquility into the troubled heart.

The country in the distance lay charmed, as it were, by the calm spirit of peace which seemed to have diffused itself over the whole landscape—western windows were turned into fire—the motionless lakes shone like mirrors wherever they caught the beams of the evening light, as did several bends of the broad river which barely moved within its winding banks through the meadows below. The sun at length became half concealed behind the summit of the western hills, so that his rich and gorgeous beams fell only upon the surrounding uplands, now lit into purple, leaving the valleys and lower parts of the country to repose in that beautiful shadow which can be looked upon from the higher parts, only through the crimson glory of the departing light. And now the sun has disappeared—is gone—but still how beautiful is the fading splendor that sleeps for a little on the mountain tops, then becomes dimmer and dimmer—then a faint streak which gradually melts away until it is finally lost in the soft shadows of that thoughtful hour. And even thus passeth away all human glory!

The ruin which we have mentioned stood about half way between the residence of Brian M'Loughlin and the mountain village to which we have alluded. Proceeding homewards from the latter place, having performed an errand of mercy and charity, was a very beautiful girl, exquisitely formed, but somewhat below the middle size. She was Brian M'Loughlin's only daughter—a creature that breathed of goodness, grace, and all those delightful qualities that make woman a ministering angel amidst the cares, and miseries, and sorrows of life. Her figure, symmetry itself, was so light, and graceful, and elegant, that a new charm was displayed by every motion, as a new beauty was discovered by every change of her expressive countenance; her hair was like the raven's wing, and her black eye, instead of being sharp and piercing, was more in accordance with the benignity of her character, soft, sweet, and mellow. Her bust and arm were perfection, and the small white hand and taper fingers would have told a connoisseur or sculptor, that her foot, in lightness and elegance of formation, might have excited the envy of Iris or Camilla.

Having reached the ruin, she was surprised to see the figure of a thin woman, dressed in black, issue out of it, and approach her with somewhat of caution in her manner. Mary M'Loughlin was a girl of strong mind and firm character, and not likely to feel alarmed by any groundless cause of apprehension. She immediately recognized the woman, who was no other than our old friend Poll Doolin, and in the phrases peculiar to the country, made the usual kind inquiry after her health and welfare.

"It's a very unusual thing, Poll," she proceeded, "to see you in this part of the neighborhood!"

"It is," returned Poll, "I wasn't so near the mountains this many a day; an' I wouldn't be here now, only on your account, Miss M'Loughlin."

Now, Mary was by no means ignorant of the enmity which this woman entertained against her father and family, in consequence of having prosecuted and transported her profligate son. Without the slightest apprehension on that account, she felt, however, a good deal puzzled as to the meaning which could be attached to Poll's words.

"How, on my account, Poll? I don't understand you."

"Neither you nor yours desarve it at my hands; but for all that, I am here to do you a good turn."

"I hope I never deserved any evil at your hands, Poll."

"No, but you're your father's daughter for all that, an' it's not usual to hate the tree and spare the branches."

"I suppose you allude to the transportation of your son; but remember, Poll, that I was only a child then; and don't forget that had your son been honest, he might still be a comfort and a credit to you, instead of a shame and a sorrow. I don't mean, nor do I wish to hurt your feelings,

Poll; but I am anxious that you should not indulge in such bitterness of heart against my father, who only did what he could not avoid."

"Well," said Poll, "never mind that—although it isn't aisy for a mother to forget her child wid all his faults; I am here, as I said, on your account—I am here to tell you, that there is danger about you and before you, and to put you on your guard against it. I am here, Miss Mary M'Loughlin, and if I'm not your friend—I'm not sayin' that I am not—still I'm the friend of one that is your friend, and that will protect you if he can."

"That is very strange, Poll, for I know not how I can have an enemy. What danger could a simple inoffensive girl like me feel? I who have never knowingly offended anybody."

"I have said the truth," replied Poll, "and did my duty—you're now warned, so be on your guard and take care of yourself."

"But how, Poll? You mention danger, yet have not told me what it is, where it's to come from, nor how I am to guard myself against it."

"I'm not at liberty," said Poll, "but this I *can* tell you, it's threatening you, and it comes from a quarther where you'd never look for it."

Mary, who was neither timid nor surprised, smiled with the confidence of innocence, and replied, after a short pause of thought—

"Well, Poll, I have been thinking over my friends, and cannot find one that is likely to be my enemy; at all events I am deeply obliged to you; still if you could mention what the danger *is*, I would certainly feel the obligation to be greater. As it is, I thank you again. Good evening!"

"Stay, Miss Mary," replied Poll, walking eagerly a step or two after her, "stay a minute; I have run a risk in doin' this—only promise me, to keep what I said to you a saicret for a while—as well as that you ever had any private talk wid me. Promise this."

"I shall certainly not promise any such thing, Poll; so far from that, I will mention every word of your conversation to my father and family, the moment I reach home. If, as you say, there is danger before or around me, there are none whose protection I should so naturally seek."

"But this," said Poll, with an appearance of deep anxiety, "this is a matther of mere indifference to you: it's to me the danger is, if you spake of it—to me, I say—not to you."

"But I can have no secrets from my family."

"Well, but is it ginerous in you to put me—ay, my very life in danger—when all you have to do is merely to say nothing? However, since I must speak out—you'll put more than me in danger—them that you love betther, an' that you'd never carry a light heart if anything happened them."

Mary started—and a light seemed suddenly to break upon her.

"How," said she, "my engagement to Francis Harman is no secret; our marriage at no distant day being sanctioned by both our families. Is he involved in danger connected with your hints?"

"Deep and deadly, both to him and me. You don't know it, Miss Mary. If you love him, as you do—as is well known you do—if you would keep him and my poor worthless self out of danger, may be out of bloodshed—don't mention a syllable of this meetin' to any one; but of all persons livin' to himself, until I give you lave, until I can tell you it will be safe to do so. See, I kneel down with hands clasped, I beg it of you for his sake and safety!"

It was pretty well known through the parish, especially by the initiated, that this same Poll Doolin, had in truth most of its secrets in keeping; and that she had frequently conducted with success those rustic intrigues which are to be found in humble, as well as in high life. The former part of Poll's character, however, was all that had ever reached the youthful ears of poor innocent Mary, whilst of her address as a diplomatist in the plots and pursuits of love, she was utterly ignorant. Naturally unsuspicious, as we have already said, she looked upon the woman's knowing character rather as a circumstance calculated to corroborate the truth of the mystery which she must have discovered: and was so much moved by the unquestionable sincerity of her manner, and the safety of her own lover, that she assured her she would keep the secret, until permitted to divulge it; which she begged might be at as early a period as possible. Poll thanked her eagerly and gratefully, and in a few minutes, having made a circuit behind the ruin, sought the lower and richer country by a different path.

Mary unconsciously stood for some time after Poll had left her, meditating over the strange and almost unaccountable scene which had just taken place, when a rich voice, with which she was well acquainted, addressed her. She started, and on turning about, found Francis Harman before her. Twilight had now nearly passed away, and the dusk of evening was deepening into the darkness of a summer night.

"What on earth are you thinking of alone

in this place, my dear Mary, and who was that woman who just left you?"

Mary, though firm of character, was also tender and warm of heart, and felt deeply for those she loved. The interview with Poll, therefore, had excited apprehensions concerning Harman's safety, which disturbed her far more than any she felt for herself. He gave her his right arm as he spoke, and they went on towards her father's house.

"Good God," he exclaimed, before she had time to answer him, "what has disturbed or alarmed you, my sweet Mary? I feel your heart beating against my arm, in a most extraordinary manner. How is this?"

The consciousness of the injunction so solemnly and recently imposed, distressed her exceedingly. Her love of truth was like her love of life or of heaven, a sacred and instinctive principle which she must now not only violate, but be forced to run into the hateful practice of dissimulation. All this passed through her mind in a moment.

"My dear Francis, I will freely admit that the beatings of my heart are not altogether without cause; I have been somewhat disturbed, but it will not signify; I shall be quite well in a moment—but where did you come from?"

"They told me you had gone up to poor Widow Carrick's—and I took the short way, thinking to find you there. But what has disturbed you, my dear Mary? Something has, and greatly too."

She looked up with an affectionate smile into his face, although there trembled a tear upon her eyelids, as she spoke—

"Do not ask me, my dear Frank; nor don't think the circumstance of much importance. It is a little secret of mine, which I cannot for the present disclose."

"Well, my love, I only ask to know if the woman that left you was Poll Doolin."

"I cannot answer even that, Frank; but such as the secret is, I trust you shall soon know it."

"That is enough, my darling. I am satisfied that you would conceal nothing from either your family or me, which might be detrimental either to yourself or us—or which we ought to know."

"That is true," said she, "I feel that it is true."

"But then on the other hand," said he, playfully, "suppose our little darling were in possession of a secret which we ought *not* to know—what character should we bestow on the secret?"

This, though said in love and jest, distressed her so much that she was forced to tell him so—"my dear Francis," she replied, with as much composure as she could assume, "do not press me on the subject;—I cannot speak upon it now, and I consequently must throw myself on your love and generosity only for a short time, I hope."

"Not a syllable, my darling, on the subject until you resume it yourself—how are Widow Carrick's sick children?"

"Somewhat better," she replied, "the two eldest are recovering, and want nourishment, which, with the exception of my poor contributions, they cannot get."

"God love and guard your kind and charitable heart, my sweet Mary," said he, looking down tenderly into her beautiful face, and pressing her arm lovingly against his side.

"What a hard-hearted man that under agent, M'Clutchy, is," she exclaimed, her beautiful eye brightening with indignation—"do you know that while her children were ill, his bailiff, Darby O'Drive, by his orders or authority, or some claim or other, took away her goose and the only half-dozen of eggs she had for them—indeed, Frank, he's a sad curse to the property."

"He is what an old Vandal was once called for his cruelty and oppression—the Scourge of God," replied Harman, "such certainly the unhappy tenantry of the Topertoe family find him. Harsh and heartless as he is, however, what would he be were it not for the vigilance and humanity of Mr. Hickman? But are you aware, Mary, that his graceful son Phil was a suitor of yours?"

"Of mine—ha, ha, ha!—oh, that's too comical, Frank—but I am not—Had I really ever that honor?"

"Most certainly; his amiable father had the modesty to propose a matrimonial union between your family and his!"

"I never heard of it," replied Mary, "never;—but that is easily accounted for—my father, I know, would not insult me by the very mention of it."

"It's a fact though, that the illegitimate son of the blasphemous old squire, and of the virtuous and celebrated Kate Clank, hoped to have united the M'Loughlin blood with his!"

"Hush!" exclaimed Mary, shuddering, "the very thought is sickening, revolting."

"It's not a pleasant subject, certainly," said Harman, "and the less that is said about it the more disgust we shall avoid, at any rate."

Her lover having safely conducted Mary home, remained with her family only a few minutes, as the evening was advanced, and he had still to go as far as Castle Cumber, upon business connected with the manufactory, which M'Loughlin and his father had placed wholly under his superintendence.

Upon what slight circumstances does the happiness of individuals, nay, even of states and kingdoms, too frequently depend! Harman most assuredly was incapable of altogether dismissing the circumstance of the evening—involved in mystery as they unquestionably were—out of his mind; not that he entertained the slightest possible suspicion of Mary's prudence or affection; but he felt a kind of surprise at the novelty of the position in which he saw she was placed, and no little pain in consequence of the disagreeable necessity for silence which she admitted had been imposed on her. His confidence in her, however, was boundless; and from this perfect reliance on her discretion and truth, he derived an assurance that she was acting with strict propriety under the circumstances, whatever might be their character or tendency.

It may be necessary to mention here that a right of passage ran from Beleeven, the name of the village in which M'Loughlin resided, to the Castle Cumber high road, which it joined a little beyond Constitution Cottage, passing immediately through an angle of the clump of beeches already mentioned as growing behind the house. By this path, which shortened the way very much, Harman, and indeed every pedestrian acquainted with it, was in the habit of passing, and on the night in question he was proceeding along it at a pretty quick pace, when, having reached the beeches just alluded to, he perceived two figures, a male and female, apparently engaged in close and earnest conversation. The distance at first was too great to enable him to form any opinion as to who they were, nor would he have even asked himself the question, were it not that the way necessarily brought him pretty near them. The reader may form some conception then of his surprise, his perplexity, and, disguise it as he might, his pain, on ascertaining that the female was no other than Poll Doolin, and her companion, graceful Phil himself—the gallant and accomplished owner of Handsome Harry.

It appeared quite evident that the subject matter of their conversation was designed for no other ears than their own, or why speak as they did in low and guarded tones, that implied great secrecy and caution. Nay, what proved still a plainer corroboration of this—no sooner was the noise of his footsteps heard, than Poll squatted herself down behind the small hedge which separated the pathway from the space on which they stood, and this clearly with a hope of concealing her person from his observation. Phil also turned away his face with a purpose of concealment, but the impression left by his lank and scraggy outline, as it stood twisted before Harman, was such as could not be mistaken. Poll's identity not only on this occasion, but also during her hasty separation from Mary, was now established beyond the possibility of a doubt; a fact which lent to both her interviews a degree of mystery that confounded Harman. On thinking over the matter coolly, he could scarcely help believing that her appearance here was in some way connected with the circumstances which had occasioned Mary so much agitation and alarm. This suspicion, however, soon gave way to a more generous estimate of her character, and he could not permit himself for a moment to imagine the existence of anything that was prejudicial to her truth and affection. At the same time he felt it impossible to prevent himself from experiencing a strong sense of anxiety, or perhaps we should say, a feeling of involuntary pain, which lay like a dead weight upon his heart and spirits. In truth, do what he might and reason as he would, he could not expel from his mind the new and painful principle which disturbed it. And thus he went on, sometimes triumphantly defending Mary from all ungenerous suspicion, and again writhing under the vague and shapeless surmises which the singular events of the evening sent crowding to his imagination. His dreams on retiring to seek repose were frightful—several times in the night he saw graceful Phil squinting at him with a nondescript leer of vengeance and derision in his yellow goggle eyes, and bearing Mary off, like some mis-shapen ogre of old, mounted upon Handsome Harry, who appeared to be gifted with the speed of Hark-away or flying Childers, whilst he himself could do nothing but stand helplessly by, and contemplate the triumph of his hated rival.

In the mean time the respected father and grandfather of that worthy young gentleman were laboring as assiduously for his advancement in life as if he had been gifted with a catalogue of all human virtues. Old Deaker, true to his word, addressed the very next day the following characteristic epistle—

"*To the Right Hon. Lord Cumber.*

"My Lord—It is unnecessary to tell you that I was, during my life, a plain blunt fellow in all my transactions. When I was honest, I was honest like a man; and when I did the roguery, I did it like a open, fearless knave, that defied the world and scorned hypocrisy. I am, therefore, the same consistent old scoundrel as ever; or the same bluff, good-humored rascal which your old father—who sold his country—and yourself

—who would sell it too, if you had one to sell—ever found me. To make short work, then, I want you to dismiss that poor, scurvy devil, Hickman, from your agency, and put that misbegotten spawn of mine in his place. I mean Val M'Clutchy, or Val the Vulture, as they have very properly christened him. Hickman's not the thing, in any sense. He can't manage the people, and they impose upon him—then you suffer, of course. Besides, he's an anti-ascendancy man, of late, and will go against you at the forthcoming Election. The fellow pretends to have a conscience, and be cursed to him—prates about the Union—preaches against corruption—and talks about the people, as if they were fit to be anything else than what they are. This is a pretty fellow for you to have as an agent to your property. Now, I'll tell you what, my Lord—you know old Deaker well. His motto is—'*let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die.*' I'll tell you what, I say; I have a mortgage on your property for fourteen thousand pounds. Now, put in Val or I'll be speaking to my lawyer about it. Put in Val, or you will never warm your posteriors in a seat for this county, so long as I carry the key of it. In doing so, make no wry faces about it—you will only serve yourself and your property, and serve Val into the bargain. Val, to be sure, is as confounded a scoundrel as any of us, but then he is a staunch Protestant; and you ought not to be told at this time of day, that the greater the scoundrel the better the agent. Would you have a fellow, for instance, whose conscience, indeed, must stand between you and your interest? Would you have some honest blockhead, who, when you are to be served by a piece of friendly rascality, will plead scruples. If so, you are a greater fool than I ever took you to be. Make Val your agent, and it is not *you* that will suffer by him, but the people—whom, of course, no one cares a curse about. I ought to have some claim on you, I think. Many a lift I have given your precious old father, Tom Topertoe, when I did not think of pleading scruples. To tell you the truth, many a dirty trick I played for him, and never brought my conscience to account for it. Make the most of this rascally world, and of the rascals that are in it, for we are all alike in the grave. Put in Val, then, and don't made an enemy of

'Your old friend,

"RANDAL DEAKER.

P.S.—As to Val, he knows nothing of this transaction—I told him I would say so, and I keep my word. I forgot to say that if you write this beggarly devil, Hickman, a sharp letter for money, he may probably save you the trouble of turning him out. I know him well—he is a thin skinned fool, and will be apt to bolt, if you follow my advice.

"Yours as you deserve it,

"R. D."

Now, it is necessary to say here, that amidst all this pretence of open villainy, there ran an undercurrent of cunning that might escape the observation of most men. In truth, old Deaker was not only a knave, but a most unscrupulous oppressor at heart, especially when he happened to get a man in his power from whom he wished to extort a favor, or on whom he wished to inflict an injury. In the present instance he felt perfectly conscious of his power over the heartless profligate, to whom he wrote such a characteristic letter, and the result shows that he neither miscalculated the feeble principles of his correspondent, nor the consequences of his own influence over him. By due return of post he received a reply, of which the following is a copy:—

"OLD DEAKER—You have me fast, and you know it—so I suppose *must* is the word; now I'll tell you what I want, you old villain; I want two thousand pounds, and if M'Clutchy is to get the agency, I *must* have the money—so there is *my* must as well as *yours*. In the meantime I have written to Hickman on the same subject, want of money, I mean—what the consequences may be, I know not, but I fancy I can guess them.

"Yours,

"CUMBER."

CHAPTER VI.

The Life and Virtues of an Irish Absentee—Duties of an Irish Landlord—An Apologue on Property—Reasons for Appointing an Agent—M'Clutchy's Notions of his Duties—Receipt to make a Forty Shilling Freeholder.

Lord Cumber to Henry Hickman, Esq.

"*London, April 1st,* 18—

"MY DEAR HICKMAN,

"I wrote to you the day before yesterday, and, as the letter was one of a very pressing nature, I hope its influence won't be lost upon you. To you who are so well acquainted with the cursed pickle in which I am placed, it is unnecessary to say that I shall be fairly done up, unless you can squeeze something for me out of those rascally tenants of mine. *Fairly* done up is not the proper term either; for between you and me, I strongly suspect a young fellow called Swingler, an ironmonger's son, of giving me a twist too much, on more than one occasion. He was introduced, that is, proposed as a member of our

club, by Sir Robert Ratsbane, whose grandfather was a druggist, and seconded by Lord Loadstone, the celebrated lady-killer, as a regular pigeon, who dropped, by the death of old 'burn the wind,' into half a million at least. The fellow did appear to be a very capital speculation, but the whole thing, however, was a trick, as I strongly suspect; for after losing to a tolerably smart tune, our gentleman began to illustrate the doctrine of reaction, and has, under the character of a pigeon, already fleeced half a score of us. Last week I suffered to the tune of eight hundred—Sir Heavyhead to that of twelve—Bill Swag five—and the Hon. Tom Trickman himself, who scarcely ever loses, gave bills for six fifties. I can't stand this, Hickman, that is, I cannot afford to stand it. What is fifteen thousand a year to a man like me, who must support his rank, or be driven to the purgatorial alternative of being imprisoned on his own estate? Hickman, you have no bowels for me, although you can have for the hard-fisted boors on my property, who wont pay up as they ought, and all through your indolence and neglect. You *must* send me money, get it where you will; beg, borrow, rob, drive, cant, sell out—for money I must have. Two thousand within a fortnight, and no disappointment, or I'm dished. You know not the demands upon me, and therefore you, naturally enough, think very easily—much too easily—of my confounded difficulties. If you had an opera girl to keep, as I have—and a devilish expensive appendage the affectionate jade is—perhaps you might feel a little more Christian sympathy for me than you do. If you had the expense of my yacht—my large stud at Melton Mowbry and Doncaster, and the yearly deficits in my betting book, besides the never ending train of jockies, grooms, feeders, trainers, *et hoc genus omne*—to meet, it is probable, old boy, you would not feel so boundless an interest, as you say you do, in the peace and welfare of another man's tenantry, and all this at that other man's expense. You're confoundedly unreasonable, Hickman. Why feel, or pretend to feel, more for these fellows, their bare-legged wives, and ragged brats, than you do for a nobleman of rank, to whom you are deeply indebted. I mean you no offence, Hickman; you are in other respects an honest fellow enough, and if possessed of only a little less heart, as the times go, and more skill in raising money from these people, you would be invaluable to such a distressed devil as I am. As it is, I regret to say, that you are more a friend to my tenantry than to myself, which is a poor qualification for an agent. In fact, we, the Irish aristocracy living here, or absentees as you call us, instead of being assailed by abuse, want of patriotism, neglect of duties, and all that kind of stuff, have an especial claim upon the compassion of their countrymen. If you knew what we, with limited means and encumbered properties, must suffer in attempting to compete with the aristocracy of this country, who are enormously rich, you would say that we deserve immortal credit for holding out and keeping up appearances as we do—not that I think we always come off scott-free from their ridicule, especially when they see the shifts to which we are put, in order to stretch onward at their own pace. However, we must drink when we are thirsty, as well as they, and if the water happen to be low in the cistern, which, indeed, is mostly the case with us, we must, as the rook in the fable did with the pebbles, throw in rack-renting, drivings, executions, mortgages, loans, &c., in order to bring it within our reach—for there is ingenuity in everything, as the proverb says, except in roasting of eggs.

"Come, then, Hickman, set to work at once. My yacht has been damaged by a foolish wager I made to run her through a creek of reefs at low water, so that the mere repairs will cost me a cool two hundred at least. Besides this, I have pledged myself to buy my charming little Signora a pair of Blenheim spaniels that she has fallen in love with, for which I shall have to fork out a hundred and fifty *down*. I say, then, again, my dear Hickman, money, money; money by *any* means, but by *all* means money; *rem, sed quocunque modo, rem.*

"By the way is there not a man there, a kind of under-fellow in something—agent, I believe—some time appointed, named M'Snitchy, or M'Smatchey, M'Clutchy, or some such euphonious appellative? Somebody, old Deaker I think, once mentioned him to me in strong terms, and said he might become capable of being useful; and you know, Hickman, as well as I do, that every property circumstanced as mine is, requires a *useful* fellow of that particular description. For instance, I dare say, there are certain proceedings connected with your duty to which you have no great inclination, and, under these circumstances, would it not be prudent at least to resort to the agency of somebody like this M'Clutchy; a fellow not overburthened with *too* strong a perception of the *necessary pressure.* But the truth is, if I proceed in this manner, your humanity, as the cant goes, will take the alarm; you will say that my residence abroad has not improved my principles; and that I am rather strongly tainted with club morality,

and the ethics of the gaming house. So would you, perhaps, if you breathed my atmosphere, and were exposed to my temptations. But now I am preaching, and not to the right purpose either; so as I said before, I say again—money, money, money.

"I am, my dear Hickman,

"Thy friend in distress,

"CUMBER."

Henry Hickman, Esq., to the Right Honorable Lord Viscount Cumber:—

Primrose Hill, April 18—

"MY LORD:

"I have had the honor of receiving both your communications, and have read them, especially that of the first instant, with great pain. I need not tell you, that I have been your father's friend—that I have been, and still am your friend, and as such, from my age and anxiety for your lordship's welfare and reputation, I must take the liberty of one who has both sincerely at heart, to write to you in terms which a mere agent could not with propriety use. As this letter, therefore, is written for your own eye only, you will be good enough to remember that in everything severe and home-spoken in it, the friend, and not the agent speaks—at the same time, I must admit, that it is from the knowledge gained as an agent that I remonstrate as a friend.

"It is now beyond a doubt, my Lord, that your position is one surrounded with difficulties scarcely to be surmounted, unless by measures which I, as an honest man, cannot permit myself to adopt. So long as the course of life, which it has pleased your lordship's better taste and judgment to pursue, did not bring within the compass of my duties as your agent, the exhibition of principles at variance with humanity and justice, so long did I fulfil those duties with all the ability and zeal for your just interests which I could exert. But now I perceive, that you have driven me to that line beyond which I cannot put my foot, without dishonor to myself. I have been the agent of your property, my Lord, but I shall never become the instrument of your vices; and believe me, this is a distinction which in our unhappy country, is too seldom observed. Many an agent, my Lord, has built himself a fortune out of the very necessities of his employer, and left to his children the honorable reflection that their independence originated from profligacy on the one hand and dishonesty on the other. You see, my Lord, I find it necessary to be very plain with you, and to say, that however you may feel yourself disposed to follow the one course, I shall not rival you in the other. I cannot become a scourge inflicted by your necessities, not to use a harsher word, upon a suffering people, who are already exhausted and provoked by an excess of severity and neglect. Think of the predicament in which you would have me stand—of the defence which you place in my lips. Should your tenantry ask me—'why are you thus cruel and oppressive upon us?' what reply could I make but this—'I am thus cruel because his lordship is profligate. He wants money to support his mistress, to feed her vanities and excesses, and you must endure distress and privation, that the insatiable rapacity of a courtezan may be gratified. His lordship, too, has horses and dogs, in the welfare of which he feels a deep interest.' 'But why does he not feel an interest in us?' 'So he does, for are not you the persons by whose toil and labor he is enabled to support them all?'. 'So that in point of fact, we are made indirectly the agents of his crimes. The privations which we suffer—the sweat of our brows—the labor of our hands, go to the support of his wantonness, his luxury, and his extravagance! This, then, is his interest in us?' 'Yes—work, *that you may feed them*—starve, that his mistress may riot in wantonness; perish your children that his dogs may be fed!' In such a position as this, my Lord, I shall never place myself, but you may easily find many that will. The moment your necessities are known, knavery will be immediately at work, and assume its guardianship over folly. Indeed there is a monarchical spirit in knavery, which has never yet been observed. The knave keeps his fool, as did the kings of old, with this only difference, and a material one it is—that whilst the fool always lived at the king's expense, the knave lives at the fool's. How your lordship may feel under the new administration I cannot say, but I am inclined to think, you will *not* find it a distinction without a difference. By this, of course, you understand, my Lord, that I at once resign my agency.

"And now, my Lord, in addition to many other unavailable remonstrances made by me, not only against your licentious habits as a man, but against your still more indefensible conduct as a landlord, allow me to address you in a spirit of honesty, which I fear is not easily found among the class to which I belong. I look upon this as a duty which I owe less to you than to my country, because I am satisfied that the most important service which can be rendered to any man, not ashamed of either your habits or principles, is to lay before him a clear, but short and simple statement, of that which constitutes his duty as a landlord—I should say an *Irish*

landlord—for there is a national idiosyncrasy of constitution about such a man, which appears to prevent him from properly discharging his duties, either as a friend to himself, or a just man to his tenantry.

"The first principle, therefore, which an Irish landlord—or, indeed any landlord—should lay down, as his fixed and unerring guide, is ever to remember that his tenantry are his best friends—his only patrons—and that instead of looking down upon them with contempt, neglect, or even indifference, he should feel that they are his chief benefactors, who prop his influence, maintain his rank, and support his authority.

"The second is—that the duties of the landlord to his tenantry are much greater, and far more important than those of his tenantry to him, and should at least be quite as equitably and attentively discharged.

"The third is—to remember that the great mass of the population in Ireland belong to one creed, and the great bulk of landed proprietors to another; and to take care that none of those fierce and iniquitous prerogatives of power, which are claimed and exercised by those who possess property, shall be suffered, in the name of religion, or politics, or prejudice of any kind, to disturb or abridge the civil or religious rights of the people, and thus weaken the bonds which should render the interests of landlord and tenant identical. Prejudice so exercised is tyranny. Every landlord should remember that the soil is of no religion.

"The fourth is—simply to remember that those who live upon our property have bodies and souls, passions, reflections, and feelings like ourselves. That they are susceptible of hunger, cold, grief, joy, sickness, and sorrow—that they love their children and domestic relatives, are attached to their religion, bound by strong and heartfelt ties to the soil they live on, and are, in fact, moved by all those general laws and principles of life and nature, which go to make up social and individual happiness—to remember, in short, that they are men who have higher destinies in life, than merely administering to the wants, excesses, or crimes of others; and that no condition has ever yet been known to subsist between landlord and tenant, or even between man and man, by which one party is required to surrender comfort, freedom, and enjoyment, in fact, all that life is good for, merely to gratify the wants, vices, or ambition of the other.

"The fifth and last is—not by oppression, cruelty, or rapacity, to goad the people into madness and outrage, under the plausible name of law or justice; or to drive the national mind—which is a clear one—into reflections that may lead it to fall back upon first principles, or force it to remember that the universal consent by which the rights of property are acknowledged, may, under the exasperation of overstrained pressure, in a land so peculiarly circumstanced as Ireland is, be altogether withheld, and thus its whole foundations shaken or overturned, and the justice of individual claims and prescriptive right lost in the tumult.

"These principles are simple, my Lord, but they ought at least to be better known, or what would be still more desirable, better practised. As, however, my paper is nearly filled, I shall finish my communication with a short fable, to which I beg your lordship's serious attention.

"There lived a man once, who was foolish enough to entertain a senseless prejudice against cows, because they did not give milk all the year round. This man was married, and of course, had a numerous family of children, and being very lazy and improvident, depended principally upon the kindliness of an excellent cow, whose milk was the chief means of his support and theirs. At length in the due course of time, the poor cow, as every one must know, began to yield it in diminished quantities, and as it happened to be a severe year, and as the lazy man we speak of had made no provision for its occurrence, it is unnecessary to say that he and his family were put to the greatest straits for subsistence. Finding, after much deliberation, that the poor animal, which they kicked and cudgelled to excess could not change the laws of nature, or afford them that which she did not possess, it was determined by her proprietor, that as she failed in supplying them with sufficient milk, they should try the fleams, and have recourse to her blood, in order to eke out their support. Accordingly she was bled, along with being milked; but if the quantity of milk she gave before was little, it now became less, so that in proportion as they drew upon the one the other diminished, as was but natural. In this way they proceeded, milking and bleeding the poor animal at the same time, not only without any benefit to themselves, but with a certain prospect of her ultimate loss, when one day the cow, after having ruminated for some time on the treatment she was receiving, began to reflect that she could not be much worse, or rather, that she must soon altogether sink under this system of double drainage. 'Well' thought she, 'I feel how matters must close with me at last; I am indeed near the end of my tether; what have I now to fear when I know that I cannot be worse? And if I am to die, as I must, is it not better to have satis-

faction for my sufferings?' Accordingly, the next morning when her owner went to get blood for their breakfast, it so happened that the cow thrust a horn into him, and he was found lying a corpse under her lifeless carcase—the last drop of her blood having been expended under the final operation of the fleams.

"My Lord, the moral of this is as obvious as it is fearful—and fearfully have the circumstances of the country, and the principles of such men as you, caused it to be illustrated. If landlords will press too severely upon the functions of human suffering and patience, it is not to be surprised, although it is to be deplored, that where no legal remedy exists against individual cruelty or rapacity, or that plausible selfishness, which is the worst species of oppression—that the law, I say, which protects only the one party should be forgotten or despised by the other, and a fiercer code of vengeance substituted in its stead.

"With respect to Mr. M'Clutchy, surely your lordship must remember that by your own letter he was appointed under agent more than three years ago.

"If, after the many remonstrances I have had occasion to make against his general conduct to the tenants, you consider him a *useful* man upon your property, you will, in that case, have to abide the consequences of your confidence in him. You are, at all events, duly forewarned.

"I now must beg leave, my Lord, to render up my trust, to resign my situation as the agent of your estates—I do so with pain, but the course of your lordship's life has left me no other alternative. I cannot rack and goad your tenants, nor injure your own property. I cannot paralyze industry, cramp honest exertion, or distress poverty still further, merely to supply necessities which are little less than criminal in yourself and ruinous to your tenantry.

"Believe me, my Lord, I would not abandon you in your difficulties, if I saw any honorable means of extricating you from them. You know, however, that every practicable step has been taken for that purpose, but without effect—your property should grow rapidly indeed, in order to keep pace with the increasing and incessant demands which are made upon it. We can borrow no more, and the knowledge of that fact alone, ought to set a limit to your extravagance. Excuse this plainness, my Lord, it is well meant and void of intentional offence.

"I shall be ready in a few days to deliver all books, papers, documents, &c., connected with the property, to any person duly authorized by your Lordship to receive them.

"I have the honor to be, &c.,

"HENRY HICKMAN."

The Right Honorable Lord Cumber, to Valentine M'Clutchy:—

Doncaster, April, 18—

"SIR:

"In consequence of certain communications which have passed between Mr. Hickman and myself, I have determined that he shall no longer act in the capacity of my agent. The situation is therefore open, and, until a competent person shall be appointed, I authorize you to discharge its duties, and receive from him a correct statement of all accounts between us, together with all deeds, leases, books, papers, &c., in his possession; you first having procured me adequate security, the amount of which will be determined by M'Slime, my law agent, who will join or aid you in making all necessary arrangements.

"You will also have the goodness, as soon afterwards as you feel it practicable, to transmit me a *bonâ fide* account of the Ballyrocket and Tulygrindem estates, their capability of improvement, condition of the tenantry, what leases are expired, if any, and those which will soon drop, with a view of seeing what can be made out of it. In this, also, M'Slime will aid you.

"As to the person who may succeed Hickman, as a necessary preliminary he must lay down two thousand pounds, in the shape of an equivalent for the appointment. Could you within a fortnight or so, raise so much? If so, let me hear from you without delay, as it is not unlikely in that case, I may appoint yourself.

"By the way, do you understand the manufacture of forty shilling free-holders in an economical way, because if you do, it would be a desideratum. Parliament, it is said, will be dissolved in June, and I want, as well as I can remember, nearly two hundred votes. My brother lost the last election by something about that number, and I know he feels very anxious to get into parliament for many reasons. He is now on the continent, where he has been for the last three years.

Valentine M'Clutchy, Esq., to the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Cumber:—

"MY LORD:

"I have had the honor of receiving your Lordship's kind communication, to which I hasten to make the earliest possible reply. And first, my Lord, allow me to return sincere thanks for your warm kindness, in promising to appoint me your agent. You may rest assured, my Lord, that I will go through my duties as such without favor

or affection to any one, barring your lordship, whose interests it will night and day become my duty to study. With respect to the loan your lordship makes allusion to, I fear it will be out of my power to raise it—that is to the full amount; but if one-half would do, I might by the aid of friends get it together. As for security, I trust it is only necessary to say, that Randal Deaker and Cadwallader Tullywagger, Esqrs., are ready to give it to any amount, so that there is no difficulty there at all events.

"On looking again at your lordship's kind letter, it appears possible that I made a mistake in considering the two thousand as a loan; but on the other hand, there is not a man living, who respects the high principles and delicate feelings of our aristocracy more than I do, and the consequence was, that I feared in supposing it otherwise than a loan, I might offend your lordship's keen sense of honor, which I pledge my credit and reputation would grieve my heart even to think of. Under this impression, then, I shall continue to believe it a loan, until I have the honor of hearing from your lordship again.

"Your anxiety, my Lord, to ascertain the state of your property and the condition of your tenantry is certainly honorable to yourself, as being a direct proof of the generous interest you feel in their welfare. It is fortunate in this instance, that your lordship should apply to a man who has had the opportunities of becoming acquainted with both. True, I am a simple-minded man, my Lord, and if I possess one quality more than another it is a love of truth, and a slow, but straightforward perseverance in whatever is right. It is to this, always under Providence, that I owe everything. I grant indeed, that it ill becomes me to speak in this manner of myself, but my object in doing so is, that as I am about to enter into communications touching your lordship's tenants and property, you may be induced to place the fullest confidence in whatever I shall say. Many a time, indeed, my excellent and worthy friend, Mr. Hickman, has made the same observation, and I felt it gratifying in the highest degree to hear this from a man who is truth itself, and whose only fault is—if it be one—that his heart is *too* kind, and rather easily imposed on by those who deal in fraud and cunning. A man like him, who, if he cannot speak well of an absent friend, will be silent, is a jewel in this life which ought to be worn in the very core of the heart.

"With respect to the Ballyracket estate, of which I shall speak first, I cannot report so favorably as I could wish. The task, in fact, is to me, personally, a very painful one; especially with reference to that well meaning and estimable gentleman, Mr. Hickman. In the first place, my Lord, the tenantry are not at all in arrears, a circumstance which is by no means in favor of the landlord, especially an Irish one. Every one knows that an Irish landlord has other demands upon his tenantry besides the payment of their rents. Is there no stress, for instance, to be laid upon his political influence, which cannot be exerted unless through their agency? Now a tenant not in arrears to his landlord is comparatively independent, but it is not with an independent tenantry that a landlord can work his wishes. No, my Lord; the safe principle is to keep the tenant two or three gales behind, and if he fails in submission, or turns restiff, and becomes openly contumacious, *then* you have the means of rectifying the errors of his judgment in your own hands, and it can be done with the color of both law and justice, behind which any man may stand without the imputation of harsh motives, or an excessive love of subordination. I am sorry that Mr. Hickman should differ with me on this point, for he is a man whose opinions are very valuable on many things, with the exception of his amiable and kind-hearted obstinacy.

"The next disadvantage to your interests, my Lord, is another error—I am sorry to be forced to say it—of Mr. Hickman. That gentleman is an advocate for education and the spread of knowledge. Now if an agent were as much devoted to the interests of the people as he is and ought to be to those of the landlord, this principle might pass; but as I take it, that the sole duty of an agent is to extend the interest of his employer exclusively, so am I opposed to any plan or practice by which the people may be taught to think *too* clearly. For let me ask, my Lord, what class of persons, at the approach of an election, for instance, or during its continuance, are most available for our interests? Who are driven without reluctance, without thought, or without reason, in blind and infatuated multitudes, to the hustings? Certainly not those who have been educated, or taught to think and act for themselves; but the poor and the ignorant. And, my Lord, is not the vote of an ignorant man as valid in law as one who is enlightened? For these reasons, then, I do not approve of the new schools which Mr. Hickman has established; and I was pleased to hear that your lordship was sufficiently awake to your own interests, to decline granting them any support. No, my Lord; an educated people will be a thinking people—a thinking people will be an independent people—but an independent people will not be a manageable people; and if that is not placing the

subject in a satisfactory light, I know not what is.

"I need scarcely assure you, my Lord, that in my own humble way, I did everything I reasonably could to discountenance the education system. I even went so far as to prevent several of the tenants from sending their children to these schools; but, as usual, I experienced but little gratitude at their hands, or at those of their parents. This, however, was not so much owing to my interference, as to the accidental circumstance of three or four of them having been hanged or transported for crimes which they were base enough to impute to the ignorance occasioned by my principles—for so they spoke.

"Such then is the condition of the Ballyracket tenantry. They are not in arrears, and you may consequently guess at the wretched state of their moral feelings. They are, in fact, every day becoming more aware of the very kind of knowledge which we don't wish them to possess. They do not slink aside when they see you now; on the contrary, they stand erect, and look you fearlessly in the face. Upon my credit and reputation this is truth—melancholy truth, my Lord—and I fear that at the next election you will find it so to your cost.

"I have lost no time in ascertaining the other particulars mentioned in your lordship's letter. The leases of three townlands expired on March last. They are Derrydowny, Cracknaboulteen, and Ballyweltem. The principal tenant of Derrydowny is a very respectable widow—one Mrs. M'Swaddle—a woman of serious habits, if not of decided piety. She has three daughters, all of whom sit under the ministration of a Mr. Bolthan—which is pronounced Bottom—a young preacher, belonging to the Methodist connection. They are to all appearance well in the world, keep a conversation car, and have the reputation of being very honest and saving. Old M'Swaddle himself was a revenue collector, and it is said, died richer than they are willing to admit. Cracknaboulteen is altogether in the possession of the celebrated family of the M'Kegs—or, as they are called, the Five Sols—the name of each being Solomon, which is shortened into Sol. There is lame Sol, blind Sol, long Sol, uncertain Sol, and Sol of the mountain. They are celebrated distillers of poteen whiskey, but are not rich. The estate, in fact, would be better without them, were it not for their votes. The townland of Ballyweltem is principally the property of a wild faction, named M'Kippeen, whose great delight is to keep up perpetual feud against an opposite faction of the O'Squads, who on their part are every whit as eager for the fray as their enemies. These are also poor enough, and in an election are not to be depended on. I should say, in addition to this, that several renewal fines will fall in during the course of the winter. I shall, however, examine the leases, and other documents, still more searchingly, and see what can be got out of it, and how far we can go.

"The Tullygrindem estate is, I am sorry to say, in a still more disheartening condition. There is a very bitter and knowing family living on the townland of Beleeven, named M'Loughlin, who contrive to spread dangerous and destructive principles among the tenantry. They are cunning, unscrupulous, and vindictive, but cautious, plausible, and cloaked with the deepest hypocrisy. I have been endeavoring for years to conciliate, or rather, reform them by kindness, but hitherto without effect; whether I shall ultimately succeed in purifying this fountain-head of bigotry and unconstitutional principle—I do not wish to use a shorter, but a much stronger term—I cannot yet say. I shall, at all events, from a sense of justice to you, my Lord, and of kindness—mistaken it may be, I grant you—to them, continue to make the desirable attempt. My amiable friend, Hickman, has certainly been made the dupe of their adroitness, but, indeed, he is too simple and credulous for this world, as every kind-hearted man, with great benevolence and little judgment, usually is. If I had not risen honestly and honorably, as I trust I may say, through the gradations of office upon this property, I think it probable I might myself have been deceived and misled by the natural and seductive tact of this dangerous family. Mr. Hickman espouses their quarrel, not exactly their quarrel, but their cause against me; but that is so completely in accordance with his easy simplicity of character, and his pardonable love of popularity, that it rather endears him to me than otherwise.

"Indeed, I may say, my Lord, candidly and confidentially, that there is a spirit abroad upon your estates, which requires to be vigilantly watched, and checked with all due and reasonable promptitude; I allude principally to these M'Loughlins, and when I state that my excellent and well disposed friend is absolutely popular among your tenantry, even although he made them pay up to the very last gale, and that I am by no means in good odor with them, you will not be surprised when I furnish your lordship with a key to this same state of feeling which exists so generally in this country. This, then, my Lord, is the secret:—whenever an Irish agent devotes himself honestly

to the wants, wishes, and interests of his employer, especially if he be needy and pressed for money, so sure will he become unpopular with the tenantry. Now, I am somewhat unpopular with the tenantry, and my amiable friend, Hickman, is beloved by them; but I think your lordship by this time understands the why and the wherefore on both sides. As your agent, my Lord, I should regret such popularity, at the same time, I think the intentions of poor, sweet, amiable Hickman's heart, are such as we must all love and admire.

"With respect, my Lord, to the manufacture of the "forties," as a certain comical class of freeholders are termed, I could have easily undertaken to double the number you mention, on the most reasonable terms, were it not for the discouraging system adopted by Mr. Hickman. As it is, I must see what can be done; but your lordship knows that I can take no step either in this or anything else, until my appointment shall be finally confirmed. Perhaps you are not aware of the remarkable document, on the subject in question, which has recently gone its rounds in this country. It is called—

"'A RECEIPT TO MAKE A FORTY SHILLING FREEHOLDER.'

"'Take the poorest Irishman you can get, he must be destitute and ignorant, for then he will be slavish, give him a mud cabin, but no education; let the former be a bad model of an indifferent pig-stye, and held at thrice its value. Put him to repose on a comfortable bed of damp straw, with his own coat and his wife's petticoat, for bed-clothes. Pamper him on two half meals of potatoes and point per day—with water *ad libitum*. For clothing—let him have a new shirt once every three years—to give him exercise and keep him clean—a hat once in every seven, and brogues whenever he can get them. His coat and breeches—lest he might grow too independent—must be worn upon the principle of the Highlander's knife, which, although a century in the family, was never changed, except sometimes the handle and sometimes the blade. Let his right to vote be founded upon a freehold property of six feet square, or as much as may be encompassed by his own shirt, and take care that there be a gooseberry bush in the centre of it; he must have from four to ten children, as a proof of his standing in society, all *fashionably* dressed, and coming at the rate of one every twelve months. Having thus, by a liberal system of feeding and clothing, rendered him strong for labor, you must work him from dark to dark—pay him fourpence a day for three quarters of the year, with permission to beg or starve for the remainder. When in health task him beyond his strength, and when sick neglect him—for there is nothing so beautiful as kindness in a landlord, and gratitude in a tenant—and thus will your virtues become reciprocal. He must live under a gradation of six landlords, so that whoever defaults, he may suffer—and he will have the advantage of six tyrants instead of one. Your agent is to wheedle, and your bailiff to bully him; the one must promise, and the other threaten; but if both fail, you must try him yourself. Should he become intractable under all this, you must take purer measures.—Compliment him on his wife—praise and admire his children—play upon his affections, and corrupt him through his very virtues—for that will show that you love your country and her people better than your own interests. Place a promise of independence on one side of him, but a ruined cottage and extermination on the other. When all his scruples are thus honorably overcome, and his conscience skilfully removed, take him for twenty minutes or so out of his rags, put him into a voting suit that he may avoid suspicion, bring him up to the poll—steep him in the strongest perjury, then strip him of his voting suit, clap him into his rags, and having thus fitted him for the perpetration of any treachery or crime, set him at large once more, that he may disseminate your own principles upon your own property, until you may require him again. Having thus honestly discharged your duty to God and your country, go calmly to your pillow, where you can rest in the consciousness of having done all that a virtuous man and true patriot can do, to promote the comfort and independence of his fellow creatures.'

"I have the honor to be, &c., &c.,

"VAL M'CLUTCHY,"

Lord Cumber to Solomon M'Slime, Esq., Attorney at Law:—

"DEAR SIR:

"Enclosed is a letter to Mr. M'Clutchy, which I will trouble you to forward to him as soon as you can. It contains his appointment to the vacant agency, together with the proper power of attorney, and I have every reason to hope that my property will improve under him. I did think it no breach of any honorable principle to make him advance, by way of compensation, the sum of two thousand pounds. It is a thing very usually done, I am aware, and by men who would not bear any imputation against their honor. But I know not how it is, his letter has deterred me from taking the money in that light. It would be certainly

too bad to allow a person of his birth and standing in the world to teach one of mine a lesson in delicacy of feeling. For this reason, then, let him advance the money on the usual terms of loan:—*that* you can adjust between you. All I ask is, that you will not lose one moment of unnecessary time in accomplishing this business, and remitting the money. Two thousand in a fortnight will be of more value to me than four in a month, owing to the peculiar difficulties in which I am placed.

"Yours,
CUMBER.

P. S.—I say, my little saint, I hope you are as religious as ever—but in the meantime as it is not unlikely—but on the contrary very probable—if not altogether certain—that I shall be in Ireland should the election take place, I trust you will have the kindness to let me know if there's e'er a pretty girl in the neighborhood—that wants a friend and protector—ha, ha, ha—as great a sinner as ever, you see—but for that reason you know the more entitled to your prayers for my conversion. The greater the saint, the greater the sinner now-a-days—or is it the *other* way? I forget.

"CUMBER."

Lord Cumber to Val M'Clutchy, enclosed in the above:—

"DEAR SIR:

"I am very happy in appointing you to the important situation of my agent, with all the necessary powers and authority to act as may best seem to you for my advantage. The money I will take on your own terms, only I beg that you will lose no time in remitting it. I agree with you in thinking that Mr. Hickman, however well meaning, was deficient in firmness and penetration of character, so far as the tenants were concerned; and I would recommend you to avoid the errors which you perceived in him. With many principles laid down in your letter I agree, but not with all. For instance, if I understand you right, you would appear to advocate too much indulgence to the tenantry at my expense; for what else is allowing them to run into arrears. This certainly keeps the money out of my pocket, and you cannot surely expect me to countenance such a proceeding as that:—whilst I say this, it is due to you that I consider your ultimate object a correct one. Property loses a great portion of its value, unless a landlord's influence over the people be as strong as his right to the soil; and for this reason, the duty of every landlord is to exercise as powerful a control over the former, and get as much out of the latter as he can. The landlords, to be sure, are of one religion and the people of another; but so long as we can avail ourselves of the latter for political purposes, we need care but little about their creed. The results in this case are precisely the same as if the country were Protestant, and that is as much as we want. Indeed I question if the whole Irish population were Protestant to-morrow, whether the fact would not be against us. I now speak as identifying myself with British interests. Would we find them as manageable and as easily shaped to our purposes? I fear not. They would demand education, knowledge, and all the fulness of civil liberty; they would become independent, they would think for themselves, and in what predicament would that place us? Could we then work our British interests, foster British prejudices, and aid British ambition as we do? Certainly not, unless we had the people with us, and without them we are nothing.

"On the whole, then, so long as we continue to maintain our proper influence over them, I think, without doubt, we are much safer as we stand.

"With respect to the discharge of your duty, your own judgment will be a better guide than mine. As I said before, avoid Hickman's errors; I fear he was too soft, credulous, and easily played upon. Excess of feeling, in fact, is a bad qualification in an agent. Humanity is very well in its place; but a strong sense of duty is worth a thousand of it. It strikes me, that you would do well to put on a manner in your intercourse with the tenants, as much opposed to Hickman's as possible. Be generally angry, speak loud, swear roundly, and make them know their place. To bully and browbeat is not easily done with success, even in a just cause, although with a broken-spirited people it is a good gift; but after all I apprehend the best method is just to adapt your bearing to the character of the person you have to deal with, if you wish, as you ought, to arrive at that ascendency of feeling on your part, and subserviency on theirs, which are necessary to keep them in proper temper for your purposes.

"Your receipt for making a forty shilling freeholder contains many excellent ingredients, but I do not think it was honestly drawn up; that is, I believe it to be the production of some one who was not friendly to that system of franchise. I have little else to say, except that you will find it necessary I think to be very firm and rigorous. Remember that we are here to-day, and gone to-morrow; so upon this principle keep them moving at a steady pace. In three

words, think of my difficulties, and get all you can out of them—still remembering, as we say in the ring, never to train them below their strength, for that would be the loss of our own battle.

"Yours,
"CUMBER."

Solomon M'Slime, Esq., Attorney-at-law, to Lord Cumber,

"MY ESTEEMED LORD:

"I had the unmerited honor—for, indeed, to a man sensible of his many frailties as I am, I feel it is an unmerited honor—to receive any communication from one whom the Lord hath exalted to a place of such high rank in this world, as that which your lordship so worthily fills. It gives me great gratification, my Lord, to learn from your last letter that you have appointed my friend, Mr. Valentine M'Clutchy, as your agent. I am not in the habit of attributing such circumstances as this—being, as they generally are, matters of mere worldly prudence and convenience—to any over-ruling cause from above; but truly the appointment of such a man at this particular time, looks as if there were a principle of good at work for your lordship's interests. May you continue, as you do, to deserve it! Your change of agents is, indeed, one that, through the talent, energy, and integrity of Mr. M'Clutchy, is likely to redound much and largely to your own benefit. In his capacity of under agent, I have had frequent opportunities of transacting business with him; and when I contrast his quickness, clearness, honesty, and skill, with the evident want of——but no, my Lord; far be it from me, as a Christian man, to institute any rash comparison either in favor of my fellow-creature or against him, so long as sin and prejudice even for that which is good, and frailty, may render us, as they often do, liable to error. In Mr. M'Clutchy it is possible I may be mistaken; in Mr. Hickman it is possible I may be mistaken—I am not infallible—I am frail—a very sinner, but not removed wholly, I would trust, out of the range of grace. My Lord, I say again, that, as a conscientious man, and as far as mere human reason—which is at best but short-sighted—enables me to judge, I am truly cheered in spirit by this, I trust, providential change in the agency of your property. My Lord, in my various correspondence, I generally endeavor to make it a rule not to forget my Christian duties, or, so to speak, to cast a single grain of the good seed into the hearts of those to whom I am privileged to write. The calls of religion are, indeed, strong upon us, if we permitted ourselves to listen to them as we ought. Will your lordship then pardon me for reminding you, that, however humble the instrument, I have before now been the honored means of setting your godly examples of charity before the world, with the single-hearted purpose and hope that it might imitate your virtues. There is in the neighborhood a case at present of great distress, in the person of a widow and her three young children, who have been left destitute by the guilt and consequent deportation of her unhappy husband to Australia, for the crime of feloniously abstracting live mutton. I defended him professionally, or, I should say—although I do not boast of it—with an eye to the relief of his interesting wife, but without success; and what rendered his crime more unpardonable, he had the unparalleled wickedness to say, that he was instigated to it by the ill-advice and intemperate habits of this amiable woman. Will your lordship, then, allow me to put your honored name in the list of her Christian friends? Allow me, my Lord, to subscribe myself,

"Your lordship's frail, unworthy,
"but faithful and honored servant,
"SOLOMON M'SLIME."

"P. S.—With respect to your jocose and ironical postscript, may I again take the liberty of throwing in a word in season. If your lordship could so far assume a proper Christian seriousness of character, as to render the act of kindness and protection on your part such as might confer a competent independence upon a female of religious dispositions, I doubt not, should your lordship's charity continue unabated on your arrival here, that some such desirable opportunity might offer, as that of rescuing a comely but desolate maiden from distress.

"There is, indeed, a man here living on your lordship's property, who has a daughter endowed with a large portion of that vain gift called beauty. Her father and family are people of bad principle, without conscience or honesty, and, withal, utterly destitute of religion—not but that they carry themselves very plausibly to the world. Among such people, my Lord, it is not possible that this engaging damsel, who is now so youthful and innocent, could resist the evil influence of the principles that prevail in her family. Indeed, her abiding among them cannot be for her welfare in any sense.

"I have the honor, &c."

Valentine M'Clutchy, Esq., to Solomon M'Slime.

"MY DEAR M'SLIME:

"As it is beyond any doubt, that in the fair discharge of our duty, you and I can

be mutually serviceable to each other; and as it is equally evident that it is our interest, and what is more, the interest of Lord Cumber, that we should be so, I therefore think it right to observe, that in all transactions between us, each should treat the other with the most perfect confidence. For this reason, I beg to assure you, once for all, that in any proceeding that may appear harsh towards any of his lordship's tenantry, I am and shall be actuated by no other feeling, than a strong, conscientious sense of my duty to him. This is, was, and will be the principle of my whole life. And you know very well, my dear M'Slime, that if I were less devoted to those interests than I am, my popularity would be greater among the tenantry. Indeed, few men have a right to know this better than yourself, inasmuch as you stand in precisely the same beloved relation to them that I do.

"Our excellent friend Hickman is a very worthy man and exceedingly well meaning. Don't you think so? Oh, I am sure you do. Yet I know not how it happened that he left out of his system of agency some of the most valuable rights and privileges of the *landlord*. These I will mention to you when I see you, and when I have more time. I consequently must say, that in attempting to revive these rights, even while I was deputy-agent, the unjust odium that is falling upon me already, even while I had scarce time to move in them, ought rather to be—that is morally speaking—visited upon him who allowed them to lapse. Now that the fine old leases of the M'Loughlins and the Harmans, and others, have dropped, what can I do but study Lord Cumber's interest, in the first instance? Not but I would serve them if I could, and will if I can. I bear them no ill-feeling; and if they have joined in the calumnies and threats that are so unjustly uttered against me, what can I do, and what ought I do, but return good for evil? You, as a truly religious and pious man, will feel delighted to support me in this principle, and also to aid me in bearing it practically out. Any services of a similar kind that I can honestly and conscientiously render you—and none other would you accept—I shall be on my part delighted to offer. In the meantime, let me have your excellent advice as to the most efficient means of stifling the unreasonable murmurs that are rising among the people—and as touching M'Loughlin's and Harman's properties, I should be glad to see you, in order to consult upon what may or can be done for them, always compatibly with Lord Cumber's interests.

"The pair of turkies which I send you are the result of my reviving one of his lordship's rights. They are *duty-turkies*, and I do not think they will eat the worse for the *blessings* which Darby O'Drive tells me accompanied them; at least I don't find they do.

"All that I have yet written, however, is only preliminary; but now to business. I have received the letter which Lord Cumber transmitted to me, under your frank, in which I am appointed his head agent. He also is willing to accept the two thousand pounds on my own terms—that is, of course, as a loan, at the usual rate of interest. But don't you think, my dear M'Slime, that with respect to this large sum, an understanding might be entered into—or rather an arrangement made, in a quiet way, that would, I flatter myself, turn out of great ultimate advantage to his lordship. The truth is, that Lord Cumber, like most generous men, is very negligent of his own interests—at least much more so than he ought to be; and it would be most beneficial to him, in every sense, to have a person managing his estates, in the best possible condition to serve him. *His property, in fact, is not represented in the grand jury pannel of the county.* This is a great loss to him—a serious loss. In the first place, it is wretchedly, shamefully deficient in roads—both public and private. In the next place, there are many rents left unpaid, through the inability of the people, which we could get paid by the making of these roads, and other county arrangements, which the ill-thinking call jobs. In the third and last place, he has on his property no magistrate friendly to his aforesaid interests, and who would devote himself to them with suitable energy and zeal. Indeed, with regard to the murmurings and heart-burnings alluded to, I fear that such a magistrate will soon become a matter of necessity. There is a bad spirit rising and getting abroad, wherever it came from—and you know, my dear M'Slime, that it could not proceed from either you or me. You know that—you feel it. Now, what I would propose is this—Lord Cumber has sufficient interest with the government, to have me—all-unworthy as I am—appointed a magistrate. Let the government but hint to the chancellor, and the thing is done. In that event, instead of giving him this large sum of money as a loan, let it go as a *per contra* to my appointment to the bench. And there is another consideration by no means to be overlooked, which is, that by this arrangement the government would be certain to have in the commission a man who would prove himself one of the precise class which they stand in need of—that is, a useful man, devoted to their wishes.

"Now, my dear M'Slime, I mention this

to you with all the confidence of unshaken friendship. From you these representations will go to his lordship with a much better grace than they would from me. Tell him in your own peculiar way, that he shall have the two thousand for the magistracy. That is my first object as his friend—this once obtained, I have no doubt of seeing myself, ere long, a member of the grand panel, and capable of serving him still more extensively.

"Believe me to be,

"My dear M'Slime, &c.,

"VALENTINE M'CLUTCHY."

P.S.—I heard you once express a wish about a certain farm—but mum's the word—only this, I have something in my eye for you."

Solomon M'Slime to the Right Hon. Lord Cumber:—

"MY GRACIOUS LORD:

"I, of course, cannot look upon the condition you annex to the appointment of the agent as unreasonable, although my friend M'Clutchy insists, he says, for the honor of the aristocracy, that it was a mistake on your lordship's part, and that a loan only was meant. Be this as it may, I humbly hope a thought has been vouchsafed to me, by which the matter may, under Providence, assume a more agreeable character for all parties. Last night, my Lord, immediately after family worship, I found myself much refreshed in mind, but rather jaded in my poor sinful body, after the fatigues of the day—for, indeed, I had ridden a good deal since morning. However, I desired Susanna—a pious young person, who acts as children's maid, and understands my habits—to procure me a little hot water and sugar, into which, out of a necessary regard for health, which is imposed as a duty on us all, I poured a little brandy, partly for sustainment and partly to qualify the water. Having swallowed a little of this I found the two principles combine together, almost like kindred spirits, and consequently experienced both nourishment and edification from the draught. It was then, my Lord, that it was given me to turn my mind upon the transaction alluded to, I mean the condition of paying two thousand pounds for the privilege of managing your property. Indeed the thing was vouchsafed to me in this light;—your property, my Lord, is not represented in the grand panel of the county, which is certainly a serious loss to you, as there is no one here to advocate your interests, especially since poor Mr. Deaker's infirmities (would that they were all only of the body!) have caused him to attend the grand jury less frequently. Many arrangements might be advantageously made, by which your lordship would indirectly benefit;—that is, the money, so to speak, might be made to go into one pocket, in order that it should be transferred to yours. Then you have not a magistrate in your estates devoted to your special interests, as you ought to have; this is a very necessary thing, my Lord, and to which I humbly endeavor to direct your attention. Again, my Lord, you have no magistrate of true Protestant and Ascendancy principles, who from time to time, might manifest to the government that you did not forget their interests no more than your own. Now, my Lord, what man can be, or is better qualified to serve your Lordship in all these capacities than that staunch and unflinching Protestant, Mr. Val M'Clutchy? In what individual could the commission of the peace more appropriately or worthily rest than in your own agent? I therefore beg your lordship to turn this in your mind, and if advised by one so humble, I would suggest the trial of a short prayer previous to entering on it. Should you exert your influence for that purpose with the government, the gracious, I trust I may call it so—appointment—would be immediately made, and I think I know the grateful disposition of Mr. M'Clutchy sufficiently well to assure your lordship, that from a thorough Christian sense of your kindness, the two thousand pounds will be, on that condition, placed in your lordship's hands.

"I have the honor to be, my Lord,

"SOLOMON M'SLIME."

P.S. Mr. M'Clutchy is ignorant that a suggestion so well calculated to advance the best interests of general religion, has been graciously intimated to one so unworthy as I am.

Lord Cumber to Solomon M'Slime, Esq:—

"It is done—a bargain—I have arranged the business here with the secretary, and am obliged to you, my sleek little saint, for suggesting it; I wonder M'Clutchy himself did not think of it. I feel glad the old leases have dropped, for I am sure, that between you and him, you will take out of these farms all that *can* be taken. Of course M'Clutchy and you are at liberty to revive anything you like, provided it be done properly. What is it to me, who never go there? I do believe Hickman was not merely an easy fellow, but a fool; as to *glove-money—sealing-money—duty-fowls*—and *duty-work*—I tell you again, provided you increase my remittances, and work the cash out of these

fellows, you may insist upon as many of them as you can get.

"Yours,
"CUMBER."

"P.S.—What, my little saint, did you mean by that charitable blunder, concerning the widow, in your last letter? I never knew before that a woman was a widow merely because her husband was transported, as he ought to be, for sheep stealing, or because he happened to live, by compulsion, in another country. However, no matter; give her, for me, whatever you think proper, and add it to your bill of costs, as you will do.

"CUMBER."

Solomon M'Slime, Esq., to Lord Cumber:—

MY GRACIOUS LORD:

"As I have never intentionally varied from truth, I could not bear even for a moment to seem to fall into the opposite principle. I was certainly very busy on the day I had the honor and privilege of writing to your lordship, and much distressed both in mind and heart, by the woeful backsliding of a member of our congregation. On looking over the copy of the letter, however, I perceive one thing that is gratifying to me. My Lord, I made no mistake. It is not, perhaps, known to your Lordship that there are two descriptions of widows—the *real* and the *vegetable;* that is, the widow by death, and the widow by local separation from her husband. Indeed the latter is a class that requires as much sustainment and comfort as the other—being as they are, more numerous, and suffering all the privations of widowhood, poor things, except its reality. The expression, my Lord, is figurative, and taken from the agricultural occupation of ploughing; for whenever one animal is unyoked for any other purpose, such as travelling a journey or the like, the other is forthwith turned into some park or grassy paddock, and indeed generally enjoys more comfortable times than if still with the yoke-fellow; for which reason the return of the latter is seldom very earnestly desired by the other. I am happy to tell you, my Lord, that some very refreshing revivals in the religious world have recently occurred here, such as I trust will cause true religion to spread and be honored in the land; but on the other hand, I fear that Satan is at work among many evil designing persons on your Lordship's inheritance in this our neighborhood. Of this, however, that good and conscientious man Mr. M'Clutchy, will, I doubt not, give you all proper information and advice.

"I have the honor to be, my Lord, with profound humility,

"Your Lordship's unworthy servant,
"SOLOMON M'SLIME."

Valentine M'Clutchy, Esq., J. P., to Lord Cumber:—

"MY LORD:

"In point of fact, nothing could be more beneficial to your property, than my very seasonable appointment to the commission of the peace. It has extended my powers of working for your advantage, and armed me with authority that will be found very necessary in repressing outrages and disturbances when they occur; and I regret to say, that they are likely to occur much too frequently. I should be sorry to doubt Mr. Hickman's candor, but in spite of all my charity, I can scarcely avoid thinking that he did not treat your Lordship with that openness of purpose and confidence to which every landlord is entitled. Of course, I say this with great pain, and rather between ourselves, as it were; for heaven forbid, that a single syllable should escape either my tongue or pen, that might injure that gentleman's character. The path of duty, however, is often a stern one, as I find it to be on the present occasion. The truth, then, is, that I fear Mr. Hickman must have kept the disturbed state of your tenantry from your Lordship's knowledge, owing probably to a reluctance in exposing his own laxity of management. Indeed, I wish I could with a conscientious sense of my duty to your Lordship end here, so far as he is concerned. But under every circumstance, truth, and honesty, and candor, will in the long run tell for themselves. It is an unquestionable fact, then, that from whatever cause it may proceed, your tenantry and he, ever since my appointment, have had much intercourse of—not exactly a public—nor can I decidedly term it—a private nature; and it is equally true, that in proportion as this intercourse became extended and enlarged, so did the dissatisfaction of the people increase, until they are now almost ripe for outrage. I have observed, I think, that poor Hickman never was remarkable for strength of mind, though not destitute of a certain kind of sagacity; and whether his tampering—if it be tampering—with these people,—be the result of a foolish principle of envy, or whether on the other hand, there is anything political in it, I really cannot say. All I can do is to state the facts, and leave the inference to your lordship's superior penetration.

"If, however, it be the fact, that Hickman could stop to foment this unhappy feeling on your property, still, my Lord, he is not

alone in it. Indeed it is possible that the intercourse between him and them may after all be innocent, however suspicious it looks, I trust and hope it is so—for there are two other families in the neighborhood, who, to my certain knowledge, have, by diffusing wicked and disloyal principles among the tenantry, done incalculable injury. I had indeed some notion of communicating with government on the subject, but I have not as yet been able to get any information sufficiently tangible to work on. In the meantime, I think the wisest and most prudent steps I could take for your Lordship's advantage, would be to get them as quietly as possible off the estate. I think, from a twofold sense of duty, I shall be forced to do so. Their leases very fortunately have dropped in the first place, and it will not be your interest to renew them on political grounds; for they have lately expressed a determination to vote against your brother—and in the next, we can get much larger fines from other sources. Besides his large farm, one of these men, M'Loughlin, holds a smaller one of eighteen acres, of which there are fifteen years yet unexpired, yet on consulting with Mr. M'Slime, and examining the lease, he is of opinion that it contains a flaw, and can be broken. I am sure, my lord, for your sake I shall be glad of it.

"I cannot conclude without feeling grateful to Heaven for having given me such a son as I am blessed with. He is, indeed, quite invaluable to me in managing these refractory people, and were it not for his aid and vigor, I could not have been able to send your lordship the last remittance. He is truly zealous in your cause, but I regret to say, that I am not likely to be able to avail myself long of his services. He is about taking a large farm in a different part of the country with a view to marriage, a circumstance which just now occasions me much anxiety of mind, as he will be a serious loss to both your lordship and me. I am also looking out for an under agent, but cannot find one to my satisfaction. Will your lordship be kind enough to acknowledge the remittance of last week?

"I have the honor to be, my lord,
"VAL M'C."

Lord Cumber to Val M'C., Esq.:—

"DEAR SIR:

"The check came safely to hand, and seasonably, and the oftener I receive such communications the better. The best part of it, however, is gone to the devil already, for I lost six hundred on Alley Croker at the last Ascot meeting; I write in a hurry, but have time to desire you to keep your son, if possible, on the property. By the way, as the under agency is vacant, I request you will let him have it—and, if he wants a farm to marry on, try and find him one somewhere on the estate: who has a better right? and, I dare say, he will make as good a tenant as another. As to Hickman, I think you are quite mistaken, the truth being that he resigned, but was not dismissed the agency, and if he has not a wish to get himself replaced—which I do not think—I don't see what the deuce he should begin to plot about. I rather think the cause of complaint amongst the people is, that they find some difference between his laxity and your rigor; if so, you must only let them growl away, and whenever they resort to violence, of course punish them.

"Very truly yours,
"CUMBER."

"P.S.—By all means get those mischievous fellows—I forget their names—off the property, as I shall have no tenant under me who will create disturbance or sow dissension among the people. I thank you for the fine hamper of fowl, and have only to say, as above, that the oftener, &c., &c.

"CUMBER."

CHAPTER VII.

Reflections on Absenteeism—Virtues of a Loyal Magistrate—A Small Dose of Flattery—A Brace of Blessings—Darby has Notions of becoming a Convert—Hints to a Trusty Bailiff, with a Bit of Mystery—Drum Dhu, and the Comforts of Christmas Eve—An Extermination.

ONE of the greatest curses attending absenteeism is the facility with which a dishonest and oppressive agent can maintain a system of misrepresentation and falsehood, either to screen his own delinquency or to destroy the reputation of those whom he hates or fears. An absentee landlord has no guarantee beyond the honor and integrity of the man to whom he entrusts the management of his property, and consequently he ought to know that his very residence abroad presents strong temptations to persons, who, in too many instances, are not possessed of any principle strong enough to compete with their rapacity or cruelty. Valentine M'Clutchy was one of those fellows in whom the heart was naturally so hard and selfish that he loved both wealth and the infliction of oppression, simply on account of the pleasure which they afforded him. To such a man, and they formed too numerous a class, the estate of

an absentee landlord presented an appropriate, and generally a safe field for action. The great principle of his life was, in every transaction that occurred, to make the interest of the landlord on one hand, and of the tenant on the other, subservient to his own. This was their rule, and the cunning and adroitness necessary to carry it into practical effect, were sometimes scarcely deemed worth concealment, so strong was their sense of impunity, and their disregard of what seldom took place—retribution. Indeed, the absence of the landlord gave them necessarily, as matters were managed, an unlimited power over the people, and gratified that malignant vigilance which ever attends upon suspicion and conscious guilt. Many of the tenants, for instance, when driven to the uttermost depths of distress and misery, have been desperate enough to appeal to the head landlords, and almost in every case the agent himself was enabled to show them their own letters, which the absentee had in the meantime transmitted to the identical party whose tyranny had occasioned them.

The appointment of Phil to the under agency was felt even more strongly than the removal of Mr. Hickman or Val's succession to that gentleman; for there was about honest Val something which the people could not absolutely despise. His talents for business, however, prostituted as they were to such infamous purposes, only rendered him a greater scourge to the unhappy tenantry over whom he was placed. As for Phil, he experienced at their hands that combined feeling of hatred and contempt with which we look upon a man who has every disposition to villany but not the ability to accomplish its purposes in a masterly manner.

Val's promotion to the Bench did not occasion so much surprise as might be supposed. It is well known, that every such scoundrel, however he may disregard the opinions of the people whom he despises, leaves nothing undone that either meanness or ingenuity can accomplish to sustain a plausible character with the gentry of the neighborhood. In the times of which we write, the great passport to popularity among one party was the expression of strong political opinions. For this reason, Val, who was too cunning to neglect any subordinate aid to his success in life, had created for himself a certain description of character, which in a great degree occasioned much of his dishonesty and oppression to be overlooked or forgiven. Like his father, old Deaker, he was a furious Orangeman, of the true, loyal, and Ascendancy class—drank the glorious, pious, and immortal memory every day after dinner—was, in fact, master of an Orange Lodge, and altogether a man of that thorough, staunch, Protestant principle, which was then, as it has been since, prostituted to the worst purposes. For this reason, he was looked upon, by those of his own class not so much as a heartless and unscrupulous knave, as a good sound Protestant, whose religion and loyalty were of the right kidney. In accordance with these principles, he lost no time in assuming the character of an active useful man, who considered it the most important part of his duty to extend his political opinions by every means in his power, and to discountenance, in all shapes and under all circumstances, such as were opposed to them. For this purpose, there was only one object left untried and unaccomplished; but time and his undoubted loyalty soon enabled him to achieve it. Not long after his appointment to the agency, he began to experience some of these uneasy sensations which a consciousness of not having deserved well at the hands of the people will occasion. The man, as we have said, was a coward at heart; but like many others of the same class, he contrived on most occasions to conceal it. He now considered that it would, at all events, be a safe and prudent act on his part to raise a corps of yeomanry, securing a commission in it for himself and Phil. In this case he deemed it necessary to be able to lay before government such satisfactory proofs as would ensure the accomplishment of his object, and at the same time establish his own loyalty and devotion to the higher powers. No man possessed the art of combining several motives, under the simple guise of one act, with greater skill than M'Clutchy. For instance, he had an opportunity of removing from the estate as many as possible of those whom he could not reckon on for political support. Thus would he, in the least suspicious manner, and in the very act of loyalty, occasion that quantity of disturbance just necessary to corroborate his representations to government—free property from disaffected persons, whose consciences were proof against both his threats and promises—and prove to the world that Valentine M'Clutchy was the man to suppress disturbance, punish offenders, maintain peace, and, in short, exhibit precisely that loyal and truly Protestant spirit which the times required, and which, in the end, generally contrived to bring its own reward along with it.

One evening, about this period, our worthy agent was sitting in his back parlor, enjoying with Phil the comforts of a warm tumbler of punch, when the old knock already described was heard at the hall door.

"How the devil does that rascal contrive to give such a knock?" said Phil—"upon my honor and reputation, father, I could know it out of a thousand."

"It's very difficult to say," replied the other; "but I agree with you in its character—and yet, I am convinced that Master Darby by no means entertains the terror of me which he affects. However, be this as it may, he is invaluable for his attachment to our interests, and the trust which we can repose in him. I intend to make him a sergeant in our new corps—and talking of that, Phil, you are not aware that I received this morning a letter from Lord Cumber, in which he thanks me for the hint, and says he will do everything in his power to forward the business. I have proposed that he shall be colonel, and that the corps be named the Castle Cumber Yeomanry. I shall myself be captain and paymaster, and you shall have a slice of something off it, Phil, my boy."

"I have no objection in life," replied Phil, "and let the slice be a good one; only I am rather quakerly as to actual fighting, which may God of his infinite mercy prevent!"

"There will be no fighting, my hero," replied the father, laughing; "if there were, Phil, I would myself rise above all claims for military glory; but here there will be nothing but a healthy chase across the country after an occasional rebel or whiteboy, or perhaps the seizing of a still, and the capture of many a keg of neat poteen, Phil—eh? What do you say to that my boy?"

"I have no objection to that," said Phil, "provided everything is done in an open, manly manner—in broad day-light. These scoundrel whiteboys have such devilish good practice at hedge-firing, that I have already made up my mind to decline all warfare that won't be sanctioned by the sun. I believe in my soul they see better without light than with it, so that the darkness which would be a protection to them, could be none to me."

At this moment, a tap—such as a thief would give when ascertaining if the master of the house were asleep, in order that he might rob him—came to the door, and upon being desired to "come in and be d——d" Darby entered.

"You're an hour late, you scoundrel," said Val; "what have you to say for yourself?"

"Yes," added Phil, who was a perfect Achilles to every bailiff and driver on the estate—"what have you to say for yourself? If I served you right, upon my honor and reputation, I would kick you out. I would, you scoundrel, and I ought."

"I know you ought, squire, for I desarve it; but, any how, sure it was the floods that sent me round. The stick was covered above three feet, and I had to go round by the bridge. Throth his honor there ought to make the Grand Jury put a bridge acrass it, and I wish to goodness, Square Phil, you would spake to him to get them to do it next summer."

When Solomon said, that all was vanity and vexation of spirit, we hope he did not mean that the two terms were at all synonymous; because, if he did, we unquestionably stand prepared to contest his knowledge of human nature, despite both his wisdom and experience. Darby's reply was not a long one, but its effect was powerful. The very notion that Val M'Clutchy could, should, might, or ought to have such influence over the Grand Jury of the county was irresistible with the father; and that he should live to be actually called squire, nay to hear the word with his own ears, was equally so with the son.

Vanity! What sensation can the hearts of thousands—millions feel, that ought for a moment be compared, in an ecstatic sense of enjoyment, with those which arise from gratified vanity?

"Come, you sneaking scoundrel, take a glass of spirits—the night's severe," said Val.

"Yes, you sneaking scoundrel, take a glass of spirits, and we'll see what can be done about the bridge before next winter," added Phil.

"All I can say is, gintlemen," said Darby, that if you *both* take it up, it *will* be done. In the mane time, here's both your healths, your honors; an' may you both be spared on the property, as a pair of blessins to the estate!" Then, running over to Phil, he whispered in a playhouse voice—"Square Phil, I daren't let his honor hear me now, but—here's black confusion to Hickman, the desaver!"

"What is he saying, Phil? What is the cursed sneaking scoundrel saying?"

"Why your honor," interposed Darby, "I was axin' permission jist to add a thrifle to what I'm goin' to drink."

"What do you mean?" said Val.

"Just, your honor, to drink the glorious, pious, and *immoral* mimory! hip, hip, hurra!"

"And how can *you* drink it, you rascal, and you a papist?" asked Phil, still highly delighted with Darby's loyalty. "What would your priest say if he knew it?"

"Why," said Darby, quite unconscious of the testimony he was bearing to his own duplicity, "sure they can forgive me that, along with my other sins. But, any how, I have a great notion to leave them and their ralligion altogether."

"How is that, you scoundrel?" asked Val.

"Yes, you scoundrel; how is that?" added Phil.

"Why, troth," replied Darby, "I can't well account for it myself, barrin' it comes from an enlightened conscience. Mr. M'Slime gave me a tract, some time ago, called Spiritual Food for Babes of Grace, and I thought in my own conscience, afther readin' it carefully over, that it applied very much to *my* condition."

"Ah!" said Phil, "what a babe you are! but no matter; I'm glad you have notions of becoming a good sound Protestant; take my word there's nothing like it. A man that's a good sound Protestant is always a loyal fellow, and when he's drunk, drinks—to hell with the Pope."

"Phil, don't be a fool," said his father, who inherited many, if not all of old Deaker's opinions. "If you are about to become a Protestant, Darby, that's a very different thing from changing your religion—inasmuch as you must have one to change first. However, as you say, M'Slime's your man, and be guided by him."

"So I intend, sir; and he has been spakin' to me about comin' forrid publickly, in regard of an intention he has of writin' a new tract consarning me, to be called the Converted Bailiff, or a Companion to the Religious Attorney; and he says, sir, that he'll get us bound up together."

"Does he?" said Val, dryly; "strung up, I suppose he means."

"Troth your honor's right," replied Darby; "but my own mimory isn't what it used to be—it was strung up, he said, sure enough, sir."

"Very well," said Val, "but now to business. Phil, my boy, you may move off for a little—Darby and I have a small matter to talk over, that nobody must hear but ourselves."

"All right," replied Phil; "so take care of yourselves;" and accordingly left the room.

Now the truth was, that M'Clutchy, who perfectly understood the half-witted character of his son—for be it known that worthy Phil was considered by those who had the honor of his acquaintance, as anything but an oracle—did not feel himself justified in admitting the said Phil to full confidence in all his plans and speculations.

"You see now," said he, addressing Darby sternly—"you see the opinion which I entertain of your honesty, when I trust you more than I do my son."

"Troth I do your honor—and by the same token did I ever betray you?"

"Betray, you scoundrel! what had you to betray?" said Val, indignantly, "whatever I do is for the benefit of the country in general, and for Lord Cumber's property in particular: you know that."

"Know it! doesn't the whole world know it, sir?"

"Well, then"—said Val, softening—"now to business. In the first place observe my words—listen."

Darby said nothing, but looked at him in the attitude of deep and breathless attention.

"Whenever you happen to execute a warrant of distress—that is, when removing furniture or any other property off the premises, keep a sharp look out for any papers or parchments that happen to come in your way. It would do no harm if you should slip them quietly into your pocket and bring them to me. I say quietly, because there is a spirit abroad among the people that we must watch; but if they once suspected that we were on the look out for it, they might baffle us; these papers, you know can be returned."

"I see, your honor," said Darby—"there you are right, as, indeed, you always are."

"Very well, then. Is the night dark and stormy?"

"So dark, sir, that a blind man could see it."

Val then approached the bailiff, looked cautiously about the room—opened the door, and peeped into the hall; after which he returned, and placing about half-a-dozen written papers in his hand, whispered something to him with great earnestness and deliberation. Darby heard him with profound attention, nodded his head significantly as he spoke, and placed the point of his right hand fore-finger on the papers, as if he said, "I see—I understand—I am to do so and so with *these;* it's all clear—all right, and it shall be done before I sleep."

The conversation then fell into its original channel, and Phil was summoned, in order to receive his instructions touching a ceremony which was to take place on the following day but one; which ceremony simply consisted in turning out upon the wide world, without house, or home, or shelter, about twenty three families, containing among them the young, the aged, the sick, and the dying—but this is a scene to which we must beg the reader's more particular attention.

There stood, facing the west, about two miles from Constitution Cottage, an irregular string of cabins, with here and there something that might approach the comfortable air of a middle size house. The soil on which they stood was an elevated moor,

studded with rocks and small cultivated patches, which the hard hand of labor had, with toil and difficulty, worn from what might otherwise be called a cold, bleak, desert. The rocks in several instances were overgrown with underwood and shrubs of different descriptions, which were browsed upon by meagre and hungry-looking goats, the only description of cattle that the poverty of these poor people allowed them to keep, with the exception of two or three families, who were able to indulge in the luxury of a cow. In winter it had an air of shivering desolation that was enough to chill the very blood, even to think of; but in summer, the greenness of the shrubs, some of which were aromatic and fragrant, relieved the dark, depressing spirit which seemed to brood upon it. This little colony, notwithstanding the wretchedness of its appearance, was not, however, shut out from a share of human happiness. The manners of its inhabitants were primeval and simple, and if their enjoyments were few and limited, so also were their desires. God gave them the summer breeze to purify their blood, the sun of heaven to irradiate the bleakness of their mountains, the morning and evening dressed in all their beauty, and music of their mountain streams, and that of the feathered songsters, to enliven their souls with its melody. The voices of spring, of summer, of autumn, were cheerful in their ears as the voices of friends, and even winter, with all his wildness and desolation, was not without a grim complacence which they loved. They were a poor, harmless, little community, so very humble and inoffensive, as to be absolutely beneath the reach of human resentment or injustice. Alas! they were not so.

The cause of the oppression which was now about to place them in its iron grasp, was as simple as it was iniquitous. They refused to vote for Lord Cumber's brother, and were independent enough to respect the rights of conscience, in defiance of M'Clutchy's denunciations. They had voted for the gentleman who gave them employment, and who happened besides, to entertain opinions which they approved. M'Clutchy's object was to remove them from the property, in order that he might replace them with a more obedient and less conscientious class; for this was his principle of action under such circumstances.

It so happened that there lived among them a man named O'Regan, who, in point of comfort, was at the head of this little community. He was a quiet and an affectionate individual, industrious, sober, and every way well conducted. This inoffensive and virtuous man, and his faithful wife, had been for some time before the period we are describing, under the shadow of deep affliction. Their second child, and his little brother, together with the eldest, who for two or three years before had been at service in England, were all that had been spared to them—the rest having died young. This second boy was named Torley, and him they loved with an excess of tenderness and affection that could scarcely be blamed. The boy was handsome and manly, full of feeling, and possessed of great resolution and courage; all this, however, was ultimately of no avail in adding to the span of the poor youth's life. One day in the beginning of autumn, he overloaded himself with a log of fir which he had found in the moors; having laid it down to rest, he broke a blood-vessel in attempting to raise it to his shoulder the second time: he staggered home, related the accident as it had occurred, and laid himself down gently upon his bed. Decline then set in, and the handsome and high-spirited Torley O'Regan, lay patiently awaiting his dissolution, his languid eye dim with the shadow of its approach. From the moment it was ascertained that his death, early and unexpectedly, was known to be certain, the grief of his parents transcended the bounds of ordinary sorrow. It was indeed, a distressing thing to witness their sufferings, and to feel, in the inmost chambers of the heart, the awful wail of their desolation and despair.

Winter had now arrived in all its severity, and the very day selected for the removal of these poor people was that which fills, or was designed to fill, every Christian heart with hope, charity, affection for our kind, and the innocent enjoyment of that festive spirit which gives to the season a charm that throws the memory back upon the sweetest recollections of life—I mean Christmas eve. The morning, however, was ushered in by storm. There had been above a fortnight's snow, accompanied by hard frost, and to this was added now the force of a piercing wind, and a tremendous down pouring of hard dry drift, against which it is at any time almost impossible even to walk, unless when supported by health, youth, and uncommon strength.

In O'Regan's house there was, indeed, the terrible union of a most bitter and twofold misery. The boy was literally dying, and to this was added the consciousness that M'Clutchy would work his way in spite of storm, tempest, and sickness, nay, even death itself. A few of the inhabitants of the wild mountain village, which, by the way, was named Drum Dhu, from its black and desolate look, had too much the fear of

M'Clutchy before their eyes, to await his measures, and accordingly sought out some other shelter. It was said, however, and generally supposed, by several of the neighboring gentry, that even M'Clutchy himself would scarcely dare to take such a step, in defiance of common humanity, public opinion, and the laws both of God and—we were about to add—man, but the word cannot be written. Every step he took was strictly and perfectly legal, and the consequence was, that he had that strong argument, "*I am supported by the laws of the land,*" to enable him to trample upon all the principles of humanity and justice—to gratify political rancor, personal hatred, to oppress, persecute, and ruin.

Removal, however, in Torley O'Regan's case, would have been instant death. Motion or effort of any kind were strictly forbidden, as was conversation, except in the calmest and lowest tones, and everything at at all approaching to excitement. Still the terror lest this inhuman agent might carry his resolution into effect on such a day, and under such circumstances, gave to their pitiable sense of his loss a dark and deadly hue of misery, at which the heart actually sickens. From the hour of nine o'clock on that ominous morning, the inhabitants of Drum Dhu were passing, despite the storm, from cabin to cabin, discussing the probable events of the day, and asking each other if it could be possible that M'Clutchy would turn them out under such a tempest. Nor was this all. The scene indeed was one which ought never to be witnessed in any country. Misery in all its shapes was there—suffering in its severest pangs—sickness—disease—famine—and death—to all which was to be added bleak, houseless, homeless, roofless desolation. Had the season been summer they might have slept in the fields, made themselves temporary sheds, or carried their sick, and aged, and helpless, to distant places where humanity might aid and relieve them. But no—here were the elements of God, as it were, called in by the malignity and wickedness of man to war against old age, infancy, and disease.

For a day or two proceeding this, poor Torley thought he felt a little better, that is to say, his usual symptoms of suffering were mitigated, as is sometimes the case when human weakness literally sinks below the reach of pain itself. Ten o'clock had arrived and he had not yet awoke, having only fallen asleep a little before daybreak. His father went to his bed-side, and looking down saw that he was still asleep, with a peaceful smile irradiating his features, as it were with a sense of inward happiness and tranquility. He beckoned to his mother who approached the bed, and contemplated him with that tearless agony which sears the heart and brain, until the feeling would be gladly exchanged for madness. The conversation which followed was in Irish, a circumstance that accounts for its figurative style and tenderness of expression.

"What is that smile," said the father.

"It is the peace of God," said the mother, "shining from an innocent and happy heart. Oh! Torley, my son, my son!"

"Yes," replied the father, "he is going to meet happy hearts, but he will leave none in this house behind him—even little Brian that he loved so well—but where was there a heart so loving as his?" This we need scarcely observe, was all said in whispers.

"Ah!" said the father, "you may well ask—but don't you remember this day week, when we were talking of M'Clutchy—'I hope,' says he, 'that if he should come, *I'll* be where no agent can turn me out—that is, in heaven—for I wouldn't wish to live to see you both and little Brian put from the place that we all loved so well'—and then he wiped away the tears from his pale cheeks.—Oh! Torley, my son—my son—are you laving us! laving us forever?"

The father sat down quietly on a chair, and put his hand upon his forehead, as if to keep the upper part of his head from flying off—for such, he said, were the sensations he felt. He then wrung his hands until the joints cracked, and gave one short convulsive sob; which no effort of his could repress. The boy soon afterwards opened his eyes, and fixed them with the same peaceful and affectionate smile upon his parents.

"Torley," said the mother, kissing him, "how do you feel, our flower?"

"Aisier," said he, "but I think weaker—I had a dream," he continued; "I thought I was looking in through a great gate at the most beautiful place that ever was—and I said to myself, what country can that be, that's so full of light, and music, and green trees, and beautiful rivers? 'That is heaven,' said a sweet voice beside me, but I could see no one. I looked again, and then I thought I saw my three little brothers standin' inside the gate smilin'—and I said, 'ar'n't you my brothers that died when you were young?' 'Yes,' said they, 'and we are come to welcome you here.' I was then goin' to go in, when I thought I saw my father and Brian runnin' hand in hand towards the gate, and as I was goin' in I thought they called after me—'wait, Torley, dear, for we will follow you soon.'"

"And I hope we all will, our blessed treasure; for when you leave us, son of our

hearts, what temptation will we have to stay afther you? Your voice, achora, will be in our ears, and your sweet looks in our eyes—but that is all that will be left of you—and your father and I will never have a day's happiness more. Oh, never—never!"

"You both know I wouldn't lave you if I could help it, but it's the will of God that I should go; then when I'll be so happy, won't it take the edge off your grief. Bring Brian here. He and I were all that was left you, since Ned went to England—and now you will have only him. I needn't bid you to love him, for I know that you loved both of us, may be more than you ought, or more than I desarved; but not surely more than Brian does. Brian, my darling, come and kiss your own Torley that keept you sleeping every night in his bosom, and never was properly happy without you—kiss me when I can feel you, for I know that before long, you will kiss me when I can't kiss you—Brian, my darling life, how loth I am to lave you, and to lave you all, father—to lave you all, mother."

As he spoke, and paused from time to time, the tumult of the storm without, and the fury with which it swept against the roof, door, and windows of the house, made a terrible diapason to the sweet and affecting tone of feeling which pervaded the remarks of the dying boy. His father, however, who felt an irrepressible dread of what was expected to take place, started at the close of the last words, and with a heart divided between the two terrors, stood in that stupefaction which is only the resting-place of misery, where it takes breath and strengthens itself for its greatest trials. He stood with one hand as before, pressed upon his forehead, and pointed with the other to the door. The wife, too, paused, for she could not doubt for a moment, that she heard sounds mingling with those of the storm which belonged not to it. *It was Christmas eve!*

"Stop, Mary," said he, the very current of his heart stilled—its beating pulses frozen, as it were, by the terrible apprehension—"stop, Mary; you can open the door, but in such a morning as this you couldn't shut it, and the wind and drift would come in and fill the house, and be the death of our boy. No, I must open the door myself, and it will require all my strength to shut it."

"I hear it all, now," said Torley, "the cries and the shouting, the screechings and the——well, you need not be afeared; put poor Brian in with me, for I know there is no Irishman but will respect a death-bed, be it landlord, or agent, ay, or bailey. Oh, no, father, the hand of God is upon us, and if they respect nothing else, they will surely respect *that*. They won't move me, mother, when they see me; for that would kill me—that would be to murder a dying man."

The father made no reply, but rushed towards the door, which he opened and closed after him with more ease than he had expected. The storm, in fact, was subsiding; the small hard drift had ceased, and it was evident from the appearance of the sky that there was likely to be a change for the better.

It would, indeed, appear, as if the Divine Being actually restrained and checked the elements, on witnessing the cruel, heartless, and oppressive purposes of man. But, what a scene presented itself to O'Regan, on going forth to witness the proceedings which were then about to take place on this woeful day!

Entering the northern end of this wild collection of sheelings was seen a posse of bailiffs, drivers, constables, keepers, and all that hard-hearted class of ruffians that constitute the staff of a land agent upon occasions similar to this. Immediately behind these followed a body of Orange yeomanry, dressed in regimentals, and with fire-arms—each man carrying thirty rounds of ball cartridge. We say Orange yeomen advisedly, because, at the period we speak of, Roman Catholics were not admitted into the yeomanry, unless, perhaps, one in a corps; and even out of ten corps, perhaps, you might not find the ten exceptions. When we add to this the fact, that every Protestant young man was then an Orangeman, and that a strong, relentless feeling of religious and political hatred subsisted between them and the Catholic party, we think that there are few, even among our strongest Conservatives, if any, who would attempt to defend the inhuman policy of allowing one party of Irishmen, stimulated by the worst passions, to be let loose thus armed upon defenceless men, whom, besides, they looked upon and treated as enemies.

The men in question, who were known by the *sobriquet* of Deaker's Dashers, were, in point of fact, the terror of every one in the country who was not an Orangeman, no matter what his creed or conduct might be. They were to a man guided by the true Tory principle, not only of supporting Protestantism, but of putting down Popery; and yet, with singular inconsistency, they were seldom or never seen within a church door, all their religion consisting in giving violent and offensive toasts, and their loyalty in playing party tunes, singing Orange songs, meeting in Orange lodges, and executing the will of some such oppressor as M'Clutchy, who was

by no means an exaggerated specimen of the Orange Tory.

Deaker's Dashers were commanded on this occasion by a little squat figure, all belly, with a short pair of legs at one end, and a little red, fiery face, that looked as if it would explode—at the other. The figure was mounted on horseback, and as it and its party gallantly entered this city of cabins, it clapped its hands on its side, to impress the enemy, no doubt, with a due sense of its military character and prowess. Behind the whole procession, at a little distance, rode M'Clutchy and M'Slime, graceful Phil having declined the honor of the expedition altogether, principally, he said, in consequence of the shortness of the days, and the consequent very sudden approach of night. We cannot omit to state, that Darby O'Drive was full of consequence and importance, and led on his followers, with a roll of paper containing the list of all those who were to be expelled, rolled up in his hand, somewhat like a baton of office. Opposed to this display stood a crowd of poor shivering wretches, with all the marks of poverty and struggle, and, in many cases, of famine and extreme destitution, about them and upon them. Women with their half starved children in their arms, many of them without shoes or stockings—laboring care-worn men, their heads bound up in cotton handkerchiefs, as intimating illness or recovery from illness—old men bent over their staves, some with long white hair, streaming to the breeze, and all with haggard looks of terror, produced by the well known presence among them of Deaker's Dashers.

And this was Christmas eve—a time of joy and festivity!

Other features were also presented, which gave to this miserable scene a still more depressing character. The voice of lamentation was loud, especially from the females, both young and old—all of whom, with some exceptions, were in tears. Many were rending their hair, others clapping their hands in distraction—some were kneeling to Heaven to implore its protection, and not a few to call down its vengeance upon their oppressors. From many of the men, especially the young and healthy, came stifled curses, and smothered determinations of deep and fearful vengeance. Brows darkened, eyes gleamed, and teeth were ground with a spirit that could neither be mistaken or scarcely condemned. M'Clutchy was then sowing the wind; but whether at a future day to reap the whirlwind, we are not now prepared to state.

At length it was deemed time that the ceremony should commence; and M'Clutchy, armed also with a case of pistols, rode up to Darby:—

"O'Drive, you scoundrel," he shouted—for he saw his enemy, and got courageous, especially since he had a body of his father's Dashers at his back—O'Drive, you scoundrel, do you mean to keep us here all day? Why don't you commence? Whose is the first name on your list? The ejectment must proceed," addressing the poor people as much as Darby—"it must proceed. Everything we do is by Lord Cumber's orders, and strictly according to the law of the land. Every attempt at refusing to give up peaceable possession, makes you liable to be punished; and punished, by h—n you shall be."

"Do not swear, my dear friend," interposed M'Slime; "swear not at all; but let thy yea be yea, and thy nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than this cometh of evil. My good friends," he added, addressing himself to the people, "I could not feel justified in losing this opportunity to throw in a word in season for your sakes. I need scarcely tell you that Mr. M'Clutchy, whose character for benevolence and humanity is perfectly well known—and I would allude to his strong sense of religion, and its practical influence on his conduct, were I not afraid of giving rise to a feeling of spiritual pride in the heart of any fellow-creature, however humble; —I need not tell you, I say, that he and I are here as your true friends. I, a frail and unworthy sinner, avow myself as your friend; at least, it is the most anxious and sincere wish of my heart to do good to you; for, I trust I can honestly say, that I love my Catholic—I mean my Roman Catholic friends, and desire to meet them in the bonds of Christ. Yes, we are your friends. You know it is true that God loveth whom he chasteneth, and that it is always good to pass through the furnace of tribulation. What are we, then, but the instruments of his chastisement of you, and of bringing you through that furnace for your own good and for His honor! Be truly grateful, then, for this instance of His interposition in your favor. It is only a blessing in disguise, my friends —*strongly* disguised, I grant you—but still a blessing. And now, my friends, to prove my own sincerity—my affection, and, I trust, Christian interest in your welfare, I say unto you, that if such among you as lack bread will come to me, when this dispensation in your favor is concluded, I shall give them that which will truly nourish them."

M'Clutchy could not stand this, but went down to the little squab Dasher, who joined him in a loud fit of laughter at M'Slime's little word in season; so that the poor dismayed people had the bitter reflection to add

to their other convictions, that their misery, their cares, and their sorrows, were made a mockery of by those who were actually inflicting them.

When Darby, on whose face there was a heartless smirk of satisfaction at this opportunity of gratifying M'Clutchy, was about to enter the first cabin, there arose from the trembling creatures a loud murmur of wild and unregulated lamentation, which actually startled the bailiffs, who looked as if they were about to be assaulted. An old man then approached M'Clutchy, bent with age and infirmity, and whose white hair hung far down his shoulders—

"Sir," said he, taking off his hat, and standing before him uncovered, severe and still bitter as was the day—"I stand here in the name of these poor creatures you see about us, to beg you, for the sake of God—of Christ who redeemed us—and of the Holy Spirit that gives kindness and charity to the heart—not on this blake hill undher sich a sky, and on sich a day, to turn us out of the only shelter we have on earth! There's people here that will die if they're brought outside the door. We did not, at laist the most part of all you see before you, think you had any thought of houldin' good your threat in such a time of cowld, and storm, and disolation. Look at us, sir, then, have pity on us! Make it your own case, if you can, and maybe that will bring our destitution nearer you—and besides, sir, there's a great number of us thought betther about votin' with you, and surely you won't think of puttin' *them* out."

"It's too late now," said M'Clutchy; if you had promised me your votes in time, it was not my intention to have disturbed you—at present I am acting altogether by Lord Cumber's orders, who desires that every one refusing to vote for him shall be made an example of, and removed from the property—O'Drive, you scoundrel, do your duty."

At this moment there rushed forth from the again agitated crowd an old woman, whose grizzled locks had escaped from under her dowd cap, and were blown in confusion about her head; she wore a drugget gown that had once been yellow, and a deep blue petticoat of the same stuff; a circumstance, which, joined to the excitement, gave to her appearance a good deal of picturesque effect.

"Low born tyrant," she shouted, kneeling rapidly down and holding up her clasped hands, but not in supplication—"low born tyrant," she shouted, "stop;—spawn of blasphemin' Deaker, stop—bastard of the notorious Kate Clank, hould your hand? You see we know you and yours well. You were a bad son to a bad mother, and the curse of God will pursue you and yours, for that and your other villanies. Go back and hould your hand, I say—and don't dare to bring the vengeance of God upon you, for the plot of hell you are about to work out this day. I know that plot. Be warned. Look about you here, and think of what you're going to do. Have you no feeling for ould and helpless age—for the weakness of women, the innocence of children? Are you not afraid on such a day to come near the bed of sickness, or the bed of death, with such an intention? Here's widows and orphans, the sick and the dyin', ould age half dead, and infancy half starved; and is it upon these, that you and blasphemin' Deaker's bloody Dashers are goin' to work your will? Hould your hand, I say, or if you don't, although I needn't curse you myself, for I am too wicked for that—yet in the name of all these harmless and helpless creatures before you, I call their curses on your head! In the name of all the care, and pain, and sorrow, and starvation, and affliction, that's now before your eyes, be you cursed in soul and body—in all you touch—in all you love—cursed here, and cursed hereafter forever, if you proceed in your wicked intentions this woeful day!"

"Who is that mad-woman?" said M'Clutchy. "Let her be removed. All I can say is, that she has taken a very unsuccessful method of staying the proceedings."

"Who am I?" said she; "I will tell you that. Look at this," she replied, exposing her bosom; "these are the breasts that suckled you—between them did you lie, you ungrateful viper! Yes, you may stare—it's many a long year since the name of Kate Clank reached your ears, and now that you have heard it, it is not to bless you. Well, you remember when you heard it last—on the day you hunted your dogs at me, and threatened to have me horse-whipped—ay, to horse-whip me with your own hands, should I ever come near your cursed house. Now, you know who I am, and now I have kept my word, which was never to die till I gave you a shamed face. Kate Clank, your mother, is before you!"

M'Clutchy took the matter very coolly certainly—laughed at her, and, in a voice of thunder, desired the ejectments to proceed.

But how shall we dwell upon this miserable work? The wailings and screams, the solicitations for mercy, their prayers, their imprecations and promises, were all sternly disregarded; and on went the justice of law, accompanied by the tumult of misery. The old were dragged out—the bedrid grandmother had her couch of straw taken from under her. From the house of death, the corpse of an aged female was carried out amidst the shrieks and imprecations of both

men and women! The sick child that clung with faintness to the bosom of its distracted mother, was put out under the freezing blast of the north; and on, on, onward, from house to house, went the steps of law, accompanied still by the increasing tumult of misery. *This was upon Christmas eve—a day of joy and festivity!*

At length they reached O'Regan's, and it is not our intention to describe the occurrence at any length. It could not be done. O'Regan clasped his hands, so did his wife; they knelt —they wept—they supplicated. They stated the nature of his malady—decline—from having ruptured a blood-vessel. They ran to M'Clutchy, to M'Slime, to the squat figure on horseback. They prayed to Darby, and especially entreated a ruffian follower who had been remarkable for, and wanton in, his inhumanity, but with no effect. Darby shook his head.

"It couldn't be done," said he.

"No," replied the other, whose name was Grimes, "we can't make any differ between one and another—so out he goes."

"Father," observed the meek boy, "let them. I will only be the sooner in heaven."

He was placed sitting up in bed by the bailiffs, trembling in the cold rush of the blast; but the moment the father saw their polluted and sacrilegious hands upon him—he rushed forward accompanied by his mother.

"Stay," he said, in a loud, hoarse voice, "since *you will* have him out, let our hands, not yours, be upon him."

The ruffian told him they could not stand there all day, and without any farther respect for their feelings, they rudely wrapped the bed-clothes about him, and, carrying him out, he was placed upon a chair before the door. His parents were immediately beside him, and took him now into their own care; but it was too late—he smiled as he looked into their faces, then looked at his little brother, and giving one long drawn sigh, he passed, without pain or suffering, saving a slight shudder, into happiness. O'Regan, when he saw that his noble and beloved boy was gone, surrendered him into the keeping of his wife and other friends, who prevented his body from falling off the chair. He then bent his eye sternly upon the group of bailiffs, especially upon the rude ruffian, Grimes, whose conduct was so atrocious.

"Now listen," said he, kneeling down beside his dead son—"listen all of you that has wrought this murder of my dying boy! He is yet warm," he added, grinding his teeth and looking up to heaven, "and here beside him, I pray, that the gates of mercy may be closed upon my soul through all eternity, if I die without vengeance for your death, my son!"

His mother, who was now in a state between stupor and distraction, exclaimed—

"To be sure, darling, and I'll assist you, and so will Torley."

The death of this boy, under circumstances of such incredible cruelty, occasioned even M'Clutchy to relax something of his original intentions. He persisted, however, in accomplishing all the ejectments without exception, but when this was over, he allowed them to re-occupy their miserable cabins, until the weather should get milder, and until such of them as could, might be able to procure some other shelter for themselves and families.

When all was over, M'Slime, who had brought with him a sheaf of tracts for their spiritual sustenance, saw, from the deeply tragic character of the proceedings, that he might spare himself the trouble of such Christian sympathy as he wished to manifest for their salvation. He and M'Clutchy, to whom, by the way, he presented the truly spiritual sustenance of some good brandy out of a flask, with which he balanced the tracts in his other pocket, then took their way in the very centre of the Dashers, leaving behind them all those sorrows of life, for which, however, they might well be glad to exchange their consciences and their wealth.

The circumstances which we have just described, were too striking not to excite considerable indignation among all reasonable minds at the time. An account of that day's proceedings got into the papers, but was so promptly and fully contradicted by the united testimony of M'Clutchy and M'Slime, that the matter was made to appear very highly complimentary to the benevolence and humanity of both. "So far from the proceedings in question," the contradiction went on to say, "being marked by the wanton cruelty and inhumanity imputed to them, they were, on the contrary, as remarkable for the kindness and forbearance evinced by Messrs. M'Clutchy and M'Slime. The whole thing was a mere legal form, conducted in a most benevolent and Christian spirit. The people were all restored to their tenements the moment the business of the day was concluded, and we cannot readily forget the admirable advice and exhortation offered to them, and so appropriately offered by Solomon M'Slime, Esq., the truly Christian and benevolent law agent of the property in question."

By these proceedings, however, M'Clutchy had gained his point, which was, under the guise of a zealous course of public duty, to create a basis on which to ground his private

representations of the state of the country to government. He accordingly lost no time in communicating on the subject with Lord Cumber, who at once supported him in the project of raising a body of cavalry for the better security of the public peace; as, indeed, it was his interest to do, inasmuch, as it advanced his own importance in the eye of government quite as much as it did M'Clutchy's. A strong case was therefore made out by this plausible intriguer. In a few days after the affair of Drum Dhu, honest Val contrived to receive secret information of the existence of certain illegal papers which clearly showed that there existed a wide and still spreading conspiracy in the country. As yet, he said, he could not ground any proceeding of a definite character upon them.

The information, he proceeded to say, when writing to the Castle, which came to him anonymously, was to the effect that by secretly searching the eaves of certain houses specified in the communication received, he would find documents, clearly corroborating the existence and design of the conspiracy just alluded to. That he had accordingly done so, and to his utter surprise, found that his anonymous informant was right. He begged to enclose copies of the papers, together with the names of the families residing in the houses where they were found. He did not like, indeed, to be called a "Conspiracy hunter," as no man more deprecated their existence; but he was so devotedly attached to the interests of his revered sovereign, and those of his government, that no matter at what risk, either of person or reputation, he would never shrink from avowing or manifesting that attachment to them. And he had the honor to be, his very obedient servant.

VALENTINE M'CLUTCHY, J.P.

P.S.—He begged to enclose for his perusal a letter from his warm friend, Lord Cumber, on the necessity, as he properly terms it, of getting up a corps of cavalry, which is indeed a second thought, as they would be much better adapted, upon long pursuits and under pressing circumstances, for scouring the country, which is now so dreadfully disturbed. And has once more the honor to be, VAL. M'C.

Representations like these, aided by that most foolish and besotted tendency which so many of the ignorant and uneducated peasantry have of entering into such associations, did not fail in working out M'Clutchy's designs. Most of those in whose houses these papers were placed, fled the country, among whom was O'Regan, whose dying son Deaker's Dashers treated with such indefensible barbarity; and what made everything appear to fall in with his good fortune, it was much about this period that Grimes, the unfeeling man whom O'Regan appeared to have in his eye when he uttered such an awful vow of vengeance, was found murdered not far from his own house, with a slip of paper pinned to his coat, on which were written, in a disguised hand the words—"Remember O'Regan's son, and let tyrants tremble."

Many strong circumstances appeared to bring this murder home to O'Regan. From the day of his son's death until the illegal papers were found in the eave of his house, he had never rested one moment. His whole soul seemed darkly to brood over that distressing event, and to have undergone a change, as it were, from good to evil. His brow lowered, his cheek got gaunt and haggard, and his eye hollow and wolfish with ferocity. Neither did he make any great secret of his intention to execute vengeance on those who hurried his dying child out of life whilst in the very throes of dissolution. He was never known, however, to name any names, nor to mark out any particular individual for revenge. His denunciations were general, but fearful in their import. The necessity, too, of deserting his wife and child sealed his ruin, which was not hard to do, as the man was at best but poor, or merely able, as it is termed, to live from hand to mouth. His flight, therefore, and all the circumstances of the case considered, it is not strange that he was the object of general suspicion, and that the officers of justice were sharply on the look-out for a clue to him.

In this position matters were, when the Castle Cumber corps of cavalry made their appearance under all the glitter of new arms, housings and uniforms, with Valentine M'Clutchy as their captain and pay-master, and graceful Phil as lieutenant. Upon what slight circumstances do great events often turn. Because Phil had an ungainly twist in his legs, or in other words, because he was knock-kneed, and could not appear to advantage as an infantry officer, was the character of the corps changed from foot to cavalry, so that Phil and Handsome Harry had an opportunity of exhibiting their points together. A year had now elapsed, and the same wintry month of December had again returned, and yet no search had been successful in finding any trace of O'Regan; but if our readers will be so good as to accompany us to another scene, they will have

an opportunity of learning at least the character which M'Clutchy's new corps had won in the country.

CHAPTER VIII.

A Winter Morning—Poverty and Sorrow—Father Roche—A Mountain Journey—Raymond-Nahattha—Cabin on the Moors—M'Clutchy's Bloodhounds—The Conflict—A Treble Death.

It is the chill and ghastly dawn of a severe winter morning; the gray, cheerless opening of day borrows its faint light only for the purpose of enabling you to see that the country about you is partially covered with snow, and that the angry sky is loaded with storm. The rising sun, like some poverty-stricken invalid, driven, as it were, by necessity, to the occupation of the day, seems scarcely able to rise, and does so with a sickly and reluctant aspect. Abroad, there is no voice of joy or kindness—no cheerful murmur with which the heart can sympathize—all the warm and exhiliarating harmonies that breathe from nature in her more genial moods are silent. A black freezing spirit darkens the very light of day, and throws its dismal shadow upon everything about us, whilst the only sounds that fall upon the ear are the roaring of the bitter winds among the naked trees, or the hoarse voice of the half-frozen river, rising and falling—now near, and now far away in the distance.

On such a morning as this it was, and at such an hour, that a pale-faced, thin woman, with all the melancholy evidences of destitution and sorrow about her, knocked at the door of her parish priest, the Rev. Francis Roche. The very knock she gave had in it a character of respectful but eager haste. Her appearance, too, was miserable, and as she stood in the cold wintry twilight, it would have satisfied any one that deep affliction and wasting poverty were both at her humble heart. She had on neither shoe nor stocking, and the consequence was, that the sharp and jagged surface of the frozen ground, rendered severer by the impatient speed of her journey, had cut her feet in such a manner that the blood flowed from them in several places. Cloak or bonnet she had none; but instead of the former her humble gown was turned over her shoulders, and in place of the latter she wore a thin kerchief, drawn round her head, and held under her chin with one hand, as the lower classes of Irishwomen do in short and hasty journeys. *Her* journey, however, though hasty in this instance, was by no means short; and it was easy to perceive by her distracted manner and stifled sobs, that however poorly protected against the bitter elements, she had a grief within which rendered her insensible to their severity.

It was also apparent, that, though humble in life, she possessed, like thousands of her countrywomen, a mind of sufficient compass and strength to comprehend, when adequately moved, the united working of more than one principle at the same moment. We have said it was evident that she was under the influence of deep sorrow, but this was not all—a second glance might disclose the exhibition of a still higher principle. The woman was at prayer, and it was easy to perceive by the beads which she held in her fervently clasped hands, by the occasional knocking of her breast, and the earnest look of supplication to heaven, that her soul poured forth its aspirations in the deep-felt and anxious spirit of that religion, which affliction is found so often to kindle in the peasant's heart. She had only knocked a second time when the door was opened, and having folded up her beads, she put them into her bosom, and entering the priest's house, immediately found herself in the kitchen. In a moment a middle-aged woman, with a rush light in her hand, stirred up the greeshough, and raking the live turf out of it, she threw on a dozen well-dried peats out of the chimney corner, and soon had a comfortable and blazing fire, at which the afflicted creature, having first intimated her wish that his reverence should accompany her home, was desired to sit until he should be ready to set out.

"Why, then," exclaimed the good-natured woman, "but you had a bitther thramp of it this cowld and cuttin' mornin'—and a cowld and cuttin' mornin' it is—for sure didn't I feel as if the very nose was whipt off o' me when I only wint to open the door for you. Sit near the fire, achora, and warm yourself—throth myself feels like a sieve, the way the cowld's goin' through me;—sit over, achora, sit over, and get some heat into you."

"Thank you," said the woman, "but you know it's not a safe thing to go near the fire when one is frozen or very cowld—'twould only make me worse when I go out again, besides givin' me pain now."

"Och, troth you're right, I forgot that—but you surely didn't come far, if one's to judge by your dress; though, God knows, far or near, you have the light coverin' an you for such a morning as this is, the Lord be praised!"

"I came better than three miles," replied the woman.

"Than what?"

"Than three miles."

"Saver above, is it possible! without cloak or bonnet, shoe or stockin'—an' you have your affliction at home, too, poor thing; why the Lord look down an you, an' pity you I pray his blessed name this day! Stop, I must warm you a drink of brave new milk, and that'll help to put the cowld out of your heart—sit round here, from the breath of that back door—I'll have it ready for you in a jiffey; throth will I, an' you'll see it'll warm you and do you good."

"God help me," exclaimed the woman, "I'll take the drink, bekase I wouldn't refuse your kind heart; but it's not meat, nor drink, nor cowld, nor storm, that's throublin' me—I could bear all that, and many a time did—but then I had *him!* but now who's to comfort us—who are we to look to—who is to be our friend? Oh, in the wide world—but God is good!"—said she, checking herself from a pious apprehension that she was not sufficiently submissive to his will, "God is good—but still it's hard to think of losing him."

"Well, you won't lose him, I hope," said the good creature, stirring the new milk with a spoon, and tasting it to ascertain if it was warm enough—"Of coorse it's your husband you—whitch! itgch!—the divil be off you for a skillet, I've a'most scalded myself wid you—it's so thin that it has a thing boilin' before you could say Jack Robinson. Here now, achora, try it, an' take care it's not a trifle too hot—it'll comfort you, any how."

It is in a country like Ireland, where there is so much of that close and wasting poverty which constitutes absolute misery, that these beautiful gushes of pure and tender humanity are to be found, which spring in the obscurity of life out of the natural goodness and untutored piety of the Irish heart. It is these virtues, unseen and unknown, as they generally are, except by the humble individuals on whom they are exerted—that so often light up by their radiance the darkness and destitution of the cold and lowly cabin, and that gives an unconscious sense of cheerfulness under great privations, which those who do not know the people often attribute to other and more discreditable causes.

While the poor woman in question was drinking the warm milk—the very best restorative by the way which she could get—for poverty is mostly forced to find out its own humble comforts—Father Roche entered the kitchen, buttoned up and prepared for the journey. On looking at her he seemed startled by the scantiness of her dress on such a morning—and when she rose up at his entrance and dropped him a curtesy, exclaiming, "God save you, Father!"—at the same time swallowing down the remainder of the milk that she might not lose a moment; he cast his eye round the kitchen to see whether she had actually come in the dress she wore.

"How far have you come this morning, my poor woman?" he inquired.

"From the ride of the Sliebeen More Mountains, plaise your reverence."

"What, in your present dress! without shoe or stocking?"

"True enough, sir; but indeed it was little the cowld, or sleet, or frost, troubled me."

"Yes, God help you, I can believe *that* too—for I understand the cause of it too well—but have hope—Katty, what was that you gave her?"

"A mouthful of warm milk, your reverence, to put the cowld out of her heart."

"Ah, Katty, I wish we could put sorrow and affliction out of it—but you did well and right in the meantime; still you must do better, Katty, lend her your cloak—and your shoes and stockings too, poor thing!"

"I'm oblaged to your reverence," she replied, "but indeed I won't feel the want of them; as I said, there's only one thought that I am suffering about—and that is, for your reverence to see my husband before he departs."

"Yes—but the consequences of this cold and bitter journey may fall upon you at another time—and before long, too—so be advised by me, and don't refuse to take them."

"It's not aisy to do that, sir," she replied with a faint smile, for as she spoke, his servant had the cloak already about her shoulders; "it appears," she continued, "that this kind woman must have her will and way in everything."

"To be sure I will," said Katty, "espishially in everything that's right, any how—come here now, and while his reverence is getting his staff and mittens in the room above, I'll help you on with the shoes and stockings. Now," she added, in one of those touching and irresistible whispers that are produced by kindness and not by secrecy, "if anything happens—as God forbid there should—but if anything *does* happen, keep these till afther everything is over. Before strangers you know one wouldn't like to appear too bare, if they could help it."

The tone in which these words were spoke could not fail in at once reaching the poor woman's heart. She wept as much from gratitude as the gloomy alternative involved in Katty's benevolent offer.

"God bless you," she exclaimed, "but I trust in the Almighty, there *may* be hope and that they won't be wanted. Still, how *can* I hope when I think of the way he's in? But God is good, blessed be his holy name!"

So saying, the priest came down, and they both set out on their bleak and desolate journey.

The natural aspect of the surrounding country was in good keeping with the wild and stormy character of the morning. Before them, in the back ground, rose a magnificent range of mountains, whose snowy peaks were occasionally seen far above the dusky clouds which drifted rapidly across their bosoms. The whole landscape, in fact, teemed with a spirit of savage grandeur. Many of the glens on each side were deep and precipitous, where rock beetled over rock, and ledge projected over ledge, in a manner so fearful that the mind of the spectator, excited and rapt into terror by the contemplation of them, wondered why they did not long ago tumble into the chasm beneath, so slight was their apparent support. Even in the mildest seasons desolation brooded over the lesser hills and mountains about them; what then must it not have been at the period we are describing? From a hill a little to the right, over which they had to pass, a precipitous headland was visible, against which the mighty heavings of the ocean could be heard hoarsely thundering at a distance, and the giant billows, in periods of storm and tempest, seen shivering themselves into white foam that rose nearly to the summit of their immovable barriers.

Such was the toilsome country over which our two travellers had to pass.

It was not without difficulty and fatigue that the priest and his companion wended their way towards one of the moors we have mentioned. The snow beat against them with great violence, sometimes rendering it almost impossible for them to keep their eyes open or to see their proper path across the hills. The woman, however, trod her way instinctively, and whilst the priest aided her by his superior strength, she in return guided him by a clearer sagacity. Neither spoke much, for in truth each had enough to do in combating with the toil and peril of the journey, as well as in thinking of the melancholy scene to which they were hastening. Words of consolation and comfort he did from time to time utter; but he felt that his situation was one of difficulty. To inspire hope where there was probably no hope, might be only to deepen her affliction; and, on the other hand, to weigh down a heart already heavy laden by unnecessarily adding one gloomy forboding to its burthen, was not in his nature. Such comfort as he could give without bearing too strongly upon either her hopes or her fears he did give; and we do not think that an apostle, had he been in his place, could or ought to have done more.

They had now arrived within half a mile of the moor, when they felt themselves overtaken by a man whose figure was of a very singular and startling description, being apparently as wild and untamed as the barren waste on which he made his appearance. He was actually two or three inches above the common height, but in addition to this fact, and as if not satisfied with it, he wore three hats, one sheathed a little into the other, so that they could not readily separate, and the under one he kept always fastened to his head, in order to prevent the whole pyramid from falling off. His person seemed to gain still greater height from the circumstance of his wearing a long surtout that reached to his heels, and which he kept constantly buttoned closely about him. His feet were cased in a tight pair of leather buskins, for it was one of his singularities that he could endure neither boot nor shoe, and he always wore a glove of some kind on his left hand, but never any on his right. His features might be termed regular, even handsome; and his eyes were absolutely brilliant, yet, notwithstanding this, it was impossible to look for a moment upon his *tout ensemble* without perceiving that that spirit which stamps the impress of reason and intellect upon the human countenance, was not visible in his. Like a new and well-proportioned house which had never been occupied, everything seemed externally regular and perfect, whilst it was evident by its still and lonely character, as contrasted with the busy marks of on-going life in those around it, that it was void and without an inhabitant.

Like many others of his unhappy class, Poll Doolin's son, "Raymond-na-hattha," for it was he, and so had he been nick-named, in consequence of his wearing such a number of hats, had a remarkable mixture of humor, simplicity, and cunning. He entertained a great penchant, or rather a passion for cock-fighting, and on the present occasion carried a game one under his arm. Throughout the country no man possessed a bird of that species, with whose pedigree he was not thoroughly acquainted; and, truth to tell, he proved himself as great a thief as he was a genealogist among them. Many a time the unfortunate foxes from some neighboring cover were cursed and banned, when, if the truth had been known, the only fox that despoiled the roost was Raymond-na-hattha. One thing, however, was certain, that unless the cock was thoroughly game he might enjoy his liberty and ease long enough without molestation from Raymond. We had well nigh forgotten to say that he wore on the right side of his topmost hat a cockade of yellow cloth, from which two or three ribbons of a

scarlet color fluttered down to his shoulder, a bit of vanity which added very much to the fantastic nature of his general costume.

"Ha! Raymond, my good boy," said the priest, "how does it happen that you are so early up this stormy morning? would you not be more comfortable in your bed?"

"Airly up," replied Raymond, "airly up! that's good—to be sure you're a priest, but you don't know everything."

"Why, what am I ignorant of now, Raymond?"

"Why, that I didn't go to bed yet—so that it's up late, instead of early, I am—d'ye hear? ha, ha, now take that."

"When, where, and how did you spend the night then, Raymond; but you seem in a hurry—surely if you trot on at this rate we cannot keep up with you." The truth is, Raymond's general rate of travelling was very rapid. "Where did you spend the night, Raymond," continued the priest.

"Wid a set o' jolly cocks—ha, ha—now make money of that, d'ye hear."

"You're a riddle, Raymond; you're a riddle; there's no understanding you—where did you get the cock?—but I needn't ask; of course you stole him."

"Then why *do* you ax if you think so?"

"Because you're notorious for stealing cocks—every one knows as much."

"No, never steal 'em,—fond o' me—come wid me themselves. Look." The words were scarcely uttered when he tossed the bird up into the air, and certainly, after flying about for a few yards, he alit, and tottering against the wind towards Raymond, stretched out his neck, as if he wished to be again taken up by him.

"I see," said the priest, "but answer me—where did you spend last night now?"

"I tould you," said Raymond, "wid de jolly cocks—sure I mostly roost it; an' better company too than most people, for they're fond o' me. Didn't you see? ha, ha!"

"I believe I understand you now," said Father Roche; "you've slept near somebody's hen roost, and have stolen the cock—to whom are you carrying it?"

"You won't tell to-morrow; ha, ha, there now, take a rub too—that's one."

"Poor creature," said the priest to his companion, "I am told he is affectionate, and where he takes a fancy or has received a kindness, very grateful."

The parish where the circumstances we are describing occurred, having been that in which Raymond was born, of course the poor fool was familiar to every one in it, as indeed every one in it, young and old, was to him.

During the short dialogue between him and the priest, the female, absorbed in her own heavy sorrow, was observed by Raymond occasionally to wipe the tears from her eyes; a slight change, a shade of apparent compassion came over his countenance, and turning to her, he gently laid his hand upon her shoulder, and said, in a voice different from his flighty and abrupt manner—

"Don't cry, Mary, *he* has company, and good things that were brought to him—he has indeed, Mary; so don't be crying now."

"What do you mean, poor boy?" asked the woman; "I don't understand you, Raymond."

"It is difficult to do that at all times," said Father Roche, "but notwithstanding the wildness of his manner, he is seldom without meaning. Raymond will you tell me where you came from now?" he asked.

"From your house," he replied; "I went to fetch you to *him;* but you were both gone, and I overtook you—I could aisy do that—ha ha."

"But what is the company that's with him, Raymond?" asked the female, naturally anxious to understand this part of his communication. Raymond, however, was now in one of his silent moods, and appeared not to hear her; at all events, he did not think it worth his while to give her any reply. For a short period he kept murmuring indistinctly to himself, or if a word or two became audible, it was clear that his favorite sport of cock-fighting had altogether engrossed his attention.

They had now reached a rough, dark knoll of heath, which brought them in view of the cabin to which they were going, and also commanded an extensive and glorious prospect of the rich and magnificent inland country which lay behind them. The priest and his now almost exhausted companion, to whom its scenery was familiar, waited not to look back upon its beauty or its richness. Not so Raymond, who, from the moment they began to ascend the elevation, kept constantly looking back, and straining his eyes in one particular direction. At length he started, and placing his right hand upon the priest's shoulder, said in a suppressed but eager voice—

"Go on—go on—they're coming." Then, turning to the female—"Come," said he; "come, Mary,—I'll help you."

"Who is coming?" she exclaimed, whilst the paleness of death and terror settled in her face; "for God's mercy, Raymond, who is coming?"

"I saw them," said he; "I saw them. Come—come fast—I'll help you—don't thrimble—don't thrimble."

"Let us be guided by him," said the priest. "Raymond," he added, "we cannot go much

faster through this marshy heath, but do you aid Mary as well as you can; as for me, I will try if it be possible to quicken my pace."

He accordingly proceeded in advance of the other two for a little; but it was only for a little. The female—who seemed excited by some uncommon terror, and the wild apprehensive manner of her companion, into something not unlike the energy of despair—rushed on, as if she had been only setting out, or gained supernatural strength. In a few minutes she was beside the priest, whom she encouraged, and besought, and entreated—ay, and in some moments of more vehement feeling, absolutely chided, for not keeping pace with herself. They had now, however, came within about a hundred yards of the cabin, which they soon reached—the female entering it about a minute or two before the others, in order to make those humble arrangements about a sick-bed, which, however poverty may be forced to overlook on ordinary occasions, are always attended to on the approach of the doctor, or the minister of religion. In the instance before us, she had barely time to comfort her sick husband, by an assurance that the priest had arrived, after which she hastily wiped his lips and kissed them, then settled his head more easily; after which she spread out to the best advantage the poor quilt which covered him, and tucked it in about his lowly bed, so as to give it something of a more tidy appearance.

The interior of the cottage, which the priest and Raymond entered together, was, when the bitter and inclement nature of the morning, and the state of the miserable inmates is considered, enough to make any heart possessing humanity shudder. Two or three stools; a couple of pots; a few shelves, supported on pegs driven into the peat wall; about a bushel of raw potatoes lying in a corner; a small heap of damp turf—for the foregoing summer had been so incessantly wet, that the turf, unless when very early cut, could not be saved; a few wooden noggins and dishes; together with a bundle of straw, covered up in a corner with the sick man's coat, which, when shaken out at night, was a bed; and those, with the exception of their own simple domestic truth and affection, were their only riches. The floor, too, as is not unusual in such mountain cabins, was nothing but the natural peat, and so damp and soft was it, that in wet weather the marks of their feet were visibly impressed on it at every step. With the exception of liberty to go and come, pure air, and the light of the blessed day, they might as well have dragged out their existence in a subterraneous keep, belonging to some tyrannical old baron of the feudal ages.

There was one small apartment in this cabin, but what it contained, if it did contain anything, could not readily be seen, for the hole or window, which in summer admitted the light, was now filled with rags to keep out the cold. From this little room, however, the priest as he entered, was surprised to see a young man come forth, apparently much moved by some object which he had seen in it.

"Mr. Harman," said the priest, a good deal surprised, "who could have expected to find you here?"

They shook hands as he spoke, each casting his eyes upon this woeful scene of misery. "God pity them," ejaculated the priest, clasping his hands, and looking upwards, "and sustain them!"

"I owe it to poor Raymond, here," replied the other, "and I feel obliged to him; but," said he, taking Father Roche over to the door, "here will be a double death—father and son."

"Father and son, how is that?—she mentioned nothing of the son."

"It is very possible," said Harman, "that they are not conscious of his danger. I fear, however, that the poor boy has not many hours to live."

All that we have just described, occurred in three minutes; but short as was the time, the wife's impatience to have the rites of the church administered, could scarcely be restrained; nor was poor Raymond's anxiety much less.

"They're comin'," said he, "Mr. Harman, they are comin'; hurry, hurry, I know what they'll do."

"Who are coming, Raymond?" asked Harman.

"Oh!" said the fool, "hurry—M'Clutchy's blood-hounds."

The wife clapped her hands, shrieked, and falling on her knees, exclaimed in a piercing voice, "merciful God, look down on us! Oh, Father Roche, there is not a moment to be lost!"

The priest and Harman again exchanged a melancholy glance;—"you must all retire into the little room," said the clergyman, "until I administer to him the last rites."

They accordingly withdrew, the woman having first left a lit rush light candle at his bed-side, as she knew the ceremony required.

The man's strength was wasting fast, and his voice sinking rapidly, but on the other hand he was calm and rational, a circumstance which relieved the priest's mind very much. As is usual, having put a stole about

his neck, he first heard his confession, earnestly exhorted him to repentance, and soothed and comforted him with all those promises and consolations which are held out to repentant sinners. He then administered the Extreme Unction; which being over, the ceremony, and a solemn one it must be considered, was concluded. On this occasion, however, his death-bed consolations did not end here. There are in the Roman Catholic Church prayers for the dying, many of them replete with the fervor of Christian faith, and calculated to raise the soul to the hopes of immortality. These the priest read in a slow manner, so as that the dying man could easily accompany him, which he did with his hands clasped upon his breast, and his eyes closed, unless when he raised them occasionally to heaven. He then exhorted him with an anxiety for his salvation which transcended all earthly and temporal considerations, prayed with him and for him, whilst the tears streamed in torrents down his cheeks. Nor was the spirit of his holy mission lost; the penitent man's face assumed a placid and serene expression; the light of immortal hope beamed upon it; and raising his eyes and his feeble arms to heaven, he uttered several ejaculations in a tone of voice too low to be heard. At length he exclaimed aloud, "thanks to the Almighty that I did not commit this murder as I intended! I found it done to my hand; but I don't know who did it, as I am to meet my God!" The words were pronounced with difficulty; indeed they were scarcely uttered, when his arms fell lifelessly, as it were, by his side:—they were again suddenly drawn up, however, as if by a convulsive motion, and the priest saw that the agonies of death were about to commence; still, it was easy to perceive that the man was collected and rational.

It was now, however, that a scene took place, which could not, we imagine, be witnessed out of distracted and unhappy Ireland. Raymond, who appeared to dread the approach of those whom he termed M'Clutchy's blood-hounds, no sooner saw that the religious rites were concluded, than he ran out to reconnoitre. In a moment, however, he returned a picture of terror, and dragging the woman to the door, pointed to a declivity below the house, exclaiming—

"See, Mary, see—they're gallopin'."

The dying man seemed conscious of what was said, for the groan he gave was wild and startling; his wife dropped on her knees at the door, where she could watch her husband and those who approached, and clasping her hands, exclaimed, "To your mercy, O Lord of heaven, to your mercy take him, before he falls into their hands, that will show him none!" She then bestowed upon him a look full of an impatient agony, which no language could describe; her eyes had already become wild and piercing—her cheek flushed—and her frame animated with a spirit that seemed to partake at once of terror, intense hatred, and something like frenzy.

"They are gallopin'! they are gallopin'!" she said, "and they will find life in him!" She then wrung her hands, but shed not a tear—"speed, Hugh," she said, "speed, speed, husband of my heart—the arms of God are they not open for you; and why do you stay?" These sentiments, we should have informed our readers, were uttered, or rather chaunted in a recitative of sorrow, in Irish; Irish being the language in which the peasantry who happen to speak both it and English, always express themselves when more than usually excited. "The sacred oil of salvation is upon you—the sacrament of peace and forgiveness has lightened your soul—the breath of mercy is the breath you're breathin'—the hope of Jesus is in your heart, and the intercession of his blessed mother, she that knew sorrow herself, is before you! Then, light of my heart, the arms of God are they not open for you, and why do you stay here?"

"Nearer—nearer," she exclaimed, "they are nearer—whippin' and spurrin' their horses! Hugh O'Regan, that was the sun of my life, and of my heart, and ever without a cloud, hasten to the God of mercy! Oh, surely, you will not blame your own Mary that was your lovin' wife—and the treasure of your young and manly heart, for wishin' to see you taken from her eyes—and for wishing to see the eyes that never looked upon us all but with love and kindness, closed on us forever. Oh," said she, putting her hands to her forehead, "an' is it—*is it* come to this—that I that was dearer to him than his own life a thousand times, should now be glad to see him die—be glad to see him die! Oh! they are here," she shrieked, "before the door—you may hear their horses' feet! Hugh O'Regan," and her voice became louder and more energetic—"the white-skinned—the fair of hair, the strong of hand, and the true of heart—as you ever loved me that was once your happy bride—as you ever loved the religion of our holy church—as you hope for happiness and mercy, hasten from me—from our orphan—from all—oh, hasten to the arms of your God!"

During this scene there was a solemn silence in the house, the priest and Harman having both been struck mute at the solemnity of the scene.

"SEE! MARY, SEE! THEY ARE GALLOPING."—*Val M'Clusky*, chap. viii., p. 182.

"They are here—they are here!" she screamed. "Oh, sun of my heart, think not now of me, nor of the children of your love, for we will follow you in time—but think of the happy country you're going to,—to live in the sunshine of heaven, among saints and angels for ever! Oh, sun of my heart, think too of what you lave behind you! What is it? Oh! what is it to you—but poverty, and misery, and hardship—the cowld cabin and the damp bed—the frost of the sky—the frown of power, and the scourge of law—all this, oh, right hand of my affection, with the hard labor and the scanty food, do you fly from! Sure we had no friend in this world to protect or defend us against them that would trample us under their feet! No friend for us because we are poor, and no friend for our religion because it is despised. Then hasten, hasten, O light of my heart—and take refuge in the mercy of your God!"

"Mary," said the priest, who had his eyes fixed upon the sick man, "Give God thanks, he is dead—and beyond the reach of human enmity forever."

She immediately prostrated herself on the floor in token of humility and thanksgiving—then raising her eyes to heaven, she said, "may the heart of the woeful widow be grateful to the God who has taken him to his mercy before they came upon him! But here they are, and now I am not afraid of them. They can't insult my blessed husband now, nor murdher him, as his father's villains did our dyin' son, on the cowld Esker of Drum Dhu; nor disturb him with their barbarous torments on the bed of death—and glory be to God for that!"

Many of our readers may be led to imagine that the terrors of Mary O'Regan were altogether unproportioned to anything that might be apprehended from the approach of the officers of justice, or, at least to those who came to execute the law. The state of Irish society at that time, however, was very different from what it is now, or has been for the last twenty years. At that period one party was in the ascendant and the other directly under their feet; the former was in the possession of irresponsible power, and the other, in many matters, without any tribunal whatsoever to which they could appeal. The Established Church of Ireland was then a sordid corporation, whose wealth was parcelled out, not only without principle, but without shame, to the English and Irish aristocracy, but principally to the English. Church livings were not filled with men remarkable for learning and piety, but awarded to political prostitution, and often to young rakes of known and unblushing profligacy, connected with families of rank. The consequence was, that a gross secular spirit, replete with political hatred and religious rancor, was the only principle which existed in the place of true religion. That word was then, except in rare cases indeed, a dead letter; for such was the state of Protestant society then, and for several years afterwards, that it mattered not how much or how little a man of that creed knew about the principles of his own church; and as it was administered the less he knew of it the better—all that was necessary to constitute a good Protestant was "to hate the Pope." In truth—for it cannot be concealed, and we write it with deep pain and sorrow—the Established Church of Ireland was then, in point of fact, little else than a mere political engine held by the English government for the purpose of securing the adherence of those who were willing to give support to their measures.

In such a state of things, then, it need not be wondered at, that, neglected and secularized as it was at the period we write of, it should produce a class of men, whose passions in everything connected with religion and politics were intolerant and exclusive. Every church, no matter what its creed, unfortunately has its elect of such professors. Nor were these confined to the lower classes alone—far from it. The squire and nobleman were too frequently both alike remarkable for the exhibition of such principles. Of this class was our friend M'Clutchy, who was now a justice of the peace, a grand juror, and a captain of cavalry—his corps having, a little time before, been completed. With this *posse*, as the officers of justice, the pranks he played were grievous to think of or to remember. He and they were, in fact, the terror of the whole Roman Catholic population; and from the spirit in which they executed justice, were seldom called by any other name than that of M'Clutchy's Bloodhounds. Upon the present occasion they were unaccompanied by M'Clutchy himself—a circumstance which was not to be regretted, as there was little to be expected from his presenee but additional brutality and insult.

On arriving at the door, they hastily dismounted, and rushed into the cabin with their usual violence and impetuosity, each being armed with a carbine and bayonet.

"Hallo!" said the leader, whose name was Sharpe; "what's here? shamming sickness is it?"

"No," said Father Roche; "it is death?"

"Ay! shamming death then. Never mind—we'll soon see that. Come, Steele, give him a prod—a gentle one—and I'll engage

it'll make him find tongue, if anything will."

Steele, to whom this was addressed, drew his bayonet, and commenced screwing it on, for the purpose of executing his orders.

"A devilish good trick, too," said he; "and the first of the kind that has been practised on us yet—here goes——"

Up until this moment O'Regan's wife sat beside the dead body of her husband, without either word or motion. A smile of—it might be satisfaction, perhaps even joy, at his release; or it might be hatred—was on her face, and in her eye; but when the man pointed his bayonet at the corpse of her husband, she started to her knees, and opening out her arms, exclaimed—

"Here's my heart—and through that heart your bayonet will go, before it touches his body. Oh, if *you* have hearts in your bodies, you will surely spare the dead!"

"Here goes, ma'am," he repeated, "and you had better lave that—we're not in the habit of being checked by the like of you, at any rate, or any of your creed."

"I am not afeared to profess my creed—nor ashamed of it," she exclaimed; and if it went to that, I would die for it—but I tell you, that before your bayonet touches the dead body of my husband, it must pass through my heart!"

"Don't be alarmed, Mary," said the priest; "they surely cannot be serious. It's not possible that any being in the shape of man could be guilty of such a sacrilegious outrage upon the dead as they threaten."

"What is it *your* business?" said the leader; "go and tare off your masses, and be hanged; none of your Popish interference here, or it'll be worse for you! I say the fellow's not dead—he's only skeming. Come, Alick, put the woman aside, and tickle him up."

"Keep aside, I tell you," said Steele, again addressing her—"keep aside, my good woman, till I obey my orders—and don't provoke me."

Father Roche was again advancing to remonstrate with him, for the man's determination seemed likely to get stronger by opposition—when, just as the bayonet which had already passed under the woman's arm, was within a few inches of O'Regan's body, he felt himself dragged forcibly back, and Raymond-na-hattha stood before him, having seized both carbine and bayonet with a strong grip.

"Don't do that," he exclaimed—"don't—you'd hurt him—sure you'd hurt poor Hugh!"

The touching simplicity of this language, which, to a heart possessing the least tincture of humanity, would have more force than the strongest argument, was thrown away upon him to whom it was directed.

"Fling the blasted idiot off," shouted Sharpe; "don't you see he has let the cat out o' the bag—how could the man be hurted if he was dead; I knew it was a schame."

To throw Raymond off, however, was easier said than done, as the fellow found on attempting it. A struggle commenced between them, which, though violent, was not of long duration. Raymond's eye got turbid, and glared with a fiery light; but otherwise his complexion did not change. By a vehement twist, he wrenched the arms out of Steele's hands, hurling him from him at the same time, with such force, that he fell on the floor with a crash.

"Now," said he, pointing the bayonet to his neck, "would *you* like it?—ha, ha!—think of that."

Four carbines—the whole party consisting of five—were immediately levelled at him; and it is not improbable that half a minute more would have closed both his existence and his history, had not Father Roche and the widow both succeeded, with some difficulty, in drawing him back from the prostrate officer of justice. Raymond, after a little time, gave up the arms; but his eye still blazed at his opponent, with a glare that could not be misunderstood.

Harman, who had hitherto taken no part whatsoever in the altercation, now interfered; and with feelings which he found it nearly impossible to restrain, pointed out to them the wanton cruelty of such conduct towards both the living and the dead. "I am ashamed of you," said he, "as countrymen, as Irishmen. Your treatment of this poor heart-broken woman, amidst her desolation and sorrow, is a disgrace to the country that gave you birth, and to the religion you profess, if, indeed, you profess any."

"Come, come, my good fellow," said Sharpe, "what is it you say about my religion? I tell you I'll allow no man to spake a syllable against my religion; so keep quiet if you're wise, and don't attack that, otherwise don't be surprised if I make you dance the devil's hornpipe in half a shake, great a hairo as you are."

"And yet you felt no scruple in just now insulting religion, in the person of this reverend gentleman who never offended you."

"Him! why what the hell is he but a priest?"

"And the more entitled to your respect on that account—but since you are so easily excited in defence of your own creed, why so ready to attack in such offensive and insulting language that of another?"

"Come, come, Sharpe," said another of them, "are we to be here all day—whatever we're to do let us do it at once; if the fellow's dead, why he has had a devilish good escape of it, and if not, let us clap him on a horse, that is, provided he's able to travel. I think myself he has got the start of us, and that the wind's out of him."

"Take your time," said Steele, who felt anxious to avenge his defeat upon some one, "we must know that before ever we leave the house—and by the great Boyne, the first person that goes between me and him will get the contents of this," and as he uttered the words he coolly and deliberately cocked the gun, and was advancing as before to the dead body.

"Hold back," said Harman, in a voice which made the man start, whilst with a firm tread and resolute eye, he stood face to face before him; "hold back, and dare not violate that sacred and awful privilege, which in every country and creed under heaven is sufficient to protect the defenceless dead. What can be your object in this? are you men—have you the spirit, the courage, of men? If you are human beings, is not the sight of that unhappy fellow-creature—I hope he is happy now,—stretched out in death before you, sufficient, by the very stillness of departed life, to calm the brutal frenzy of your passions! Have you common courage? No; I tell you to your teeth that none but spiritless caitiffs and cowards would, in the presence of death and sorrow—in the miserable cabin of the destitute widow and her orphan boy—exhibit the ruffianly outrages of men who are wanton in their cruelty, merely because they know there is none to resist them; and I may add, because they think that their excesses, however barbarous, will be shielded by higher authority. No, I tell you, if there stood man for man before you, even without arms in their hands, you would not dare to act and swagger as you do, or to play these cruel pranks of oppression and tyranny anywhere, much less in the house of death and affliction! Fie upon you, you are a disgrace to everything that is human, a reproach to every feeling of manhood, and every principle of religion."

Hardened as they were by the habits of their profligate and debasing employment, such was the ascendancy of manly truth and and moral feeling over them, that for a minute or two they quailed under the indignant glance of Harman. Steele drew back his gun, and looked round on his companions to ascertain their feeling.

"Gentleman," said Father Roche, anxious to mollify them as much as he could—"gentleman, for the sake of that poor heart-broken widowed woman and her miserable orphan son—for her and his sake, and if not for theirs then, for the sake of God himself, before whose awful judgment-seat we must all stand to render an account of our works, I entreat—I implore you to withdraw—do, gentlemen, and leave her and her children to their sorrows and their misery, for the world has little else for them."

"I'm willing to go," said a fellow, ironically called Handsome Hacket, because he was blind of an eye and deeply pock-pitted—"there's no use in quarrellin' with a woman certainly—and I don't think there can be any doubt about the man's death; devil a bit."

"Well said, Vainus," exclaimed Sharpe, "and it is not ten days since we were defrauded of Parra Rackan who escaped from us in Jemmy Reilly's coffin—when we thought to *nab* him in the wakehouse—and when we went away didn't they set him at large, and then go back to bury the man that was dead. Now, how do you know, Vainus, my purty boy, that this fellow's not playin' us a trick o' the same color?"

"Come, come," said another of them who had not yet spoke, "it's aisy to know that. Curse me, Steele, if you don't give him a tickle, I will—that's all—we're losin' the day and I want my breakfast. Living or dead, and be hanged to him, I'm starved for want of something to eat—and to drink, too—so be quick I tell you."

"Very well, my buck," said Steele—"that's your sort—here goes—"

He once more advanced with a savage determination to effect his purpose—when the priest gently and in a mild spirit of remonstrance laid his hand upon his shoulder; but he had scarcely done so, when one of them seized him by the collar and flung, or rather attempted to fling, him back with great violence.

"Go on, Steele," shouted the last speaker, whose name was Harpur—"Go on—and be cursed, man, we will support you."

The words, however, were scarcely out of his lips, when Raymond, his eye glaring like that of a tiger with the wildness of untamed resentment, sprang upon him with a bound, and in a moment they once more grappled together. It was, however, only for a moment—for by the heavy blow he received from Raymond, the man staggered and fell, but ere he reached the ground, the gun, which had been ineffectually aimed at the poor fool, went off, and lodged its contents in the heart of the last speaker, who staggered, groaned, and fell lifeless where he stood.

For a minute or so, this fatal and unexpected catastrophe stunned them. They

looked upon each other amazed and apparently stupefied, "What," cried Sharpe, "is Harpur dead?" Two of them then placed their arms against the wall in order to ascertain the exact nature of the injury inflicted.

At this moment, Sharpe, who saw at once the man was indeed lifeless, raised his gun about to take aim at Raymond, when a blow from Harman felled him to the earth.

"And here's for your kindness, Mister Harman," shouted Steele; but ere the words were uttered, O'Regan's wife threw herself upon him so effectually, that he felt it impossible to avail himself of his fire-arms.

"Fight now," she shouted in Irish, "it is for your lives—it is for the widow—for the orphan—for the bed of death—and the dead that's upon it—fight now—for God will be with us! May his strength and power be in your arms and your hearts, prays the woeful widow this day! Villain—villain," she shouted, "I have you powerless now—but it's the strength of God that is in me, and not my own!"

The conflict that ensued now was bitter, savage, deadly. The moment Sharpe was knocked down, Raymond flew to their fire-arms, handed one to Harman, and kept the other himself. The men who used them were fierce, and powerful, and cruel. In a moment a furious contest took place. The four men immediately grappled, each one attempting to wrest the gun from his antagonist. Raymond, whose passions were now roused so as to resemble the ravenous fury of madness itself, at one time howled like a beast of prey, and shouted, and screamed, and laughed with maniac wildness that was enough to make almost any heart quail. His eyes blazed, his figure dilated, his muscles stood out, his mouth was white with froth, and his eyebrows were knit into a deep and deadly scowl. Altogether his appearance was frightful and appalling.

Harman was still better matched, and the struggle with his foe was for some time doubtful enough, the latter being one of the strongest and most resolute men in the whole parish. A powerful tug for the gun now took place, each pulling in opposite directions with all his might. At length a thought struck Harman, who all at once let the gun go, when the other having no longer any resisting power to sustain him, fell back upon the floor, and in an instant Harman's knee was on his chest and the gun in his possession. The man ground his teeth, and looking up into his face with a black scowl of hatred, exclaimed—

"It is your turn now, but I will have mine."

"You have had yours too long, villain," replied the other, "but in the mean time I will teach you to respect the bed of death and the afflictions of the widow."

Saying which, he vigorously applied the butt of the gun to his ribs, until he had rendered him anything but disposed for further conflict.

Both victories were achieved much about the same time; Raymond's opponent being far the more severely punished of the two. What, however, was their surprise after each had expelled his man from the cabin, to find Steele down, his gun lying on one side, O'Regan's wife fastened on his throat, and himself panting and almost black in the face!

"Here now," she exclaimed, "the battle of the widow was well fought, and God gave us strength. Put this man out with the rest."

This was accordingly done, but as in the case of his companions, the gun for the present was retained.

"See now," she proceeded, still in Irish, "what the hand of a weak woman can do, when her heart is strengthened by God, against cruelty and oppression. What made that strong man weak in my grasp? Because he knew that the weakness of the widow was his shame—the touch of her hand took away his strength; and what had he within or about him to depend upon? could he look in upon his wicked heart, and be strong? could he look upon the darkness of a bad conscience, and be strong? could he look on me—upon my dead husband, and his bed of death, and be strong? No—and above all, could he look up to the Almighty God in heaven, and be strong—no—no—no—but from all these *I* gained strength—for surely, surely, I had it not in myself!"

She uttered these sentiments with wonderful energy, and indeed, from the fire in her eye, and the flush of her cheek, it was evident she was highly excited. Father Roche, who had been engaged, and indeed, had enough to do in keeping the poor child quiet and aloof from the fray, especially from his mother—now entreated that she would endeavor to compose herself, as she had reason to thank God, he said, that neither she herself nor her resolute defenders had sustained any personal injury. She did not seem to have heard him—for on looking on the body of her husband she almost bounded over to the bed, and kneeling down rapturously, and in a spirit of enthusiastic triumph, kissed his lips.

"Now, my husband," said she, "we have fought and gained the victory—no insult did you get—no dishonor on your lowly bed where you're sleepin' your last sleep. Hugh, do you know, asthore, how the wife of your

heart fought for you? Your own poor, weak, sorrowful, heart-broken, but loving wife, that was as feeble as an infant this mornin'! But who gave her the strength to put down a strong and wicked man? The God—the good God—and to him be the glory!—in whose bosom you are now happy. Ay, we conquered — ha—ha—ha—we conquered—we conquered—ha—ha—ha!"

The dead body of Harpur in the meantime had been removed by his companions, who it was evident felt as much, if not more bitterness at their own defeat, than they did by the fatal accident which deprived him of life.

Scarcely had the wild triumph of O'Regan's wife time to subside, when it soon became evident that the tragical incidents of this bitter and melancholy morning were not yet completed.

The child alluded to by Harman in his first brief conversation with Father Roche, had been for some time past in a much more dangerous state than his parents suspected, or at least than his unhappy mother did, whose principal care was engrossed by the situation of her husband. The poor boy, at all times affectionate and uncomplaining, felt loth to obtrude his little wants and sufferings upon her attention, knowing as he did, that, owing to the nursing of his father, she was scarcely permitted three hours sleep out of the twenty-four. If he could have been afforded even the ordinary comforts of a sick-bed, it is possible he might have recovered. The only drink he could call for was "the black water," as it is termed by the people, and his only nutrition a dry potato, which he could not take; the bed he lay upon was damp straw, yet did this patient child never utter a syllable to dishearten his mother, or deepen the gloom which hung over the circumstances of the family, and his father's heart. When asked how he was, he uniformly replied "better," and his large lucid eyes would faintly smile upon his mother, as if to give her hope, after which the desolate boy would amuse himself by handling the bedclothes as invalids often do, or play with the humid straw of his cold and miserable bed, or strive to chat with his mother.

These details are very painful to those whose hearts are so elegantly and fashionably tender that they recoil with humane horror from scenes of humble wretchedness and destitution. It is good, however, that they should be known to exist, for we assure the great and wealthy that they actually *do* exist, and may be found in all their sharpness and melancholy truth within the evening shadow which falls from many a proud and wealthy dwelling in this our native land.

After all, it is likely, that had not the fearful occurrences of this morning taken place, their sweet boy might have been spared to them. The shock, however, occasioned by the discharge of the gun, and the noise of the conflict, acting upon a frame so feeble, were more than he could bear. Be this as it may, the constables were not many minutes gone, when, to their surprise, he staggered back again out of his little room, where Father Roche had placed him, and tottering across the floor, slipped in the deceased man's blood, and fell. The mother flew to him, but Harman had already raised him up; when on his feet, he looked at the blood and shuddered—a still more deadly paleness settled on his face—his breath came short, and his lips got dry and parched—he could not speak nor stand, had not Harman supported him. He looked again at the blood with horror, and then at his mother, whilst he shrank up, as it were, into himself, and shivered from head to foot.

"Darling of my heart," she exclaimed, "I understand you. Bryan, our treasure, be a man for the sake of your poor heart-broken mother—I will, I will, my darling life, I will wipe it off of you, every stain of it—why should such blood and my innocent son come together?"

She now got a cloth, and in a few moments left not a trace of it upon him. He had not yet spoken, but on finding himself cleansed from it, he stretched out his hands, thereby intimating that he wished to go to her.

"Do you not perceive a bottle on the shelf there?" said Harman, "it contains wine which I brought for his—," he checked himself;—"Alas! my poor boy," he exclaimed involuntarily, "you are doubly dear to your mother *now*. Mix it with water," he proceeded, "and give him a little, it will strengthen and revive him."

"Better," said Father Roche in a low voice, not intended for his, "to put him back into his own bed; he is not now in a state to be made acquainted with his woeful loss."

As he spoke the boy glanced at the corpse of his father, and almost at the same moment his mother put wine and water to his lips. He was about to taste it, but on looking into the little tin porringer that contained it, he put it away from him, and shuddered strongly.

"It's mixed with the blood," said he, "and I can't;" and again he put it away from him.

"Bryan, asthore," said his mother, "it's not blood; sure it's wine that Mr. Harman, the blessin' of God be upon him, brought to you."

He turned away again, however, and would not take it. "Bring me to my father," said

he, once more stretching out his arms towards his mother, "let me stay a while with him."

"But he's asleep, Bryan," said Harman, "and I'm sure you would not wish to awaken him."

"I would like to kiss him then," he replied, "and to sleep a while with him."

"Och, let him, poor darling," said his mother, as she took him in her arms, "it may ease his little heart, and then he'll feel satisfied."

"Well, if you're allowed to go to him won't you lie very quiet, and not speak so as to disturb him?" said Harman.

"I'm tired," said the child, "and I'd like to sleep in his bed. I used sometimes to do it before, and my father always kept his arms about me."

His mother's features became convulsed, and she looked up in mute affliction to heaven; but still, notwithstanding her misery, she was unable to shed one tear.

"Pulse of my heart" (*cushla machree*), she said, kissing him, "you must have your innocent and loving wish." She then gently raised the bed-clothes and placed him beside his father.

The poor pale boy sat up in the bed for about a minute, during which he glanced at the still features of the departed, then at his mother, and then at the pool of blood on the floor, and again he shuddered. All at once, however, he started and looked about him; but in a manner that betokened delight rather than alarm—his eyes brightened—and an expression almost of radiance settled upon his face. "Mother," said he, "kiss me, and let Mr. Harman kiss me."

They both did so, and his poor mother felt her heart relieved by the happiness depicted on his face. "Glory be to God," she exclaimed, "see what a change for the better has come over my blessed child."

Father Roche looked at Harman, and shook his head—"Blessed he will be soon," said he, in a low whisper, "the child is dying."

The boy started again, and the former serenity lit up his pale features.

"Bryan, you are better, darling of my life; you look a thousand pounds better than you did awhile ago."

The boy looked into her face and smiled.—"I am," said he, "but did you not hear it?"

"Hear what, jewel of my heart?"

"There it is again;" said he, looking eagerly and delightfully about him, "my father's voice;—that's three times it called me, but it didn't come from the bed, although he's in it. I will kiss him and then sleep—but I will miss his arms from about me, I think."

He then fixed himself beside that loving parent, aided by his mother, and getting his arm around his pulseless neck, he kissed him, and laying down his fair head, he fell asleep in that affecting posture. There was a solemn stillness for some minutes, and a strange feeling of fear crept over his mother's heart. She looked into the eyes of those who were about her, but the looks they returned to her carried no consolation to her spirit.

"My child," she exclaimed—"Oh, my child, what is this? Bryan, my life—my light, what ails you?" She stooped, and gently turning him about so as to see his face, she looked keenly into it for a few moments, and there certainly was the same seraphic expression which so lately lit it up. Still she felt dissatisfied, till putting her ear to his mouth and her hand to his heart, the woeful truth became known to her. The guiltless spirit of her fair-haired son had followed that of his father.

When the afflicted widow saw the full extent of her loss, she clasped her hands together, and rose up with something of a hasty movement. She looked about the miserable cabin for a moment, and then peered into the face of every one in the room—all of whom, with the exception of Raymond, were in tears. She then pressed her temples, as if striving to recollect what had happened—sat down again beside her husband and child, and to their astonishment began to sing an old and melancholy Irish air, in a voice whose wild sweetness was in singular keeping with its mournful spirit.

To the bystanders this was more affecting a thousand times than the most vehement and outrageous grief. Father Roche, however, who had had a much more comprehensive experience than his companion, knew, or at least hoped that it would not last long.

Several of the neighbors, having seen the dead body of the constable borne away, suspected that something extraordinary had occurred on the mountain, and consequently came flocking to the cabin, anxious to know the truth. By this means, their acquaintances were brought about them—aid in every shape, as far as it could be afforded, was administered, and in a short time they had a little stock of meal, butter, milk, candles, and such other simple comforts as their poor friends and neighbors had to bestow. Such is the usual kindness of the Irish people to each other in moments of destitution and sorrow. Nothing, on the present occasion, could surpass their anxiety in ascertaining the wants of this unhappy family; and in such circumstances it is that the honest prompting of the humble heart, and

its sincere participation in the calamities of its kindred poor, are known to shine forth with a lustre, which nothing but its distance from the observation of the great, or their own wilful blindness to it, could prevent it from being seen and appreciated as it ought.

Having seen her surrounded by friends and neighbors, Father Roche, after first offering, as far as he thought he could reasonably attempt it, some kind advice and consolation, prepared to take his departure with Harman, leaving Raymond behind them, who indeed refused to go. "No," said he, "I can feed Dickey here—but sure they'll want me to run messages—I'm active and soople, an I'll go to every place, for the widow can't. But tell me, is the purty boy, the fair haired boy asleep, or what?—tell me?"

"Why do you ask, Raymond?" said Father Roche.

"Bekase I love him," replied Raymond, "and I hope he'll waken! I would like to see him kiss his father again—but I'm afeared somehow I never will. If he awakens I'll give him the cock any how—bad luck to me but I will."

"Hush," said the priest, whilst a tear started to his eye at this most artless exhibition of affection for the child—"don't swear, Raymond. The sweet boy will never waken in this world; but he will in heaven, where he is awake already, and where you will see him again."

"I would rather see him here," replied the other; "and I wish I had gev him the cock first, when he came out of the room; but what'll *she* do without his white head before her?—what'll *she* do, and not have *that* to look at? But stop," said Raymond—"wait a minute, and we'll soon see whether he'll waken or not."

He then went into the little room where the poor child had lain during his illness, and immediately returned, bearing the cock in his hands—

"Wait," said he; "I was bringing the bird to poor little Brian, for I promised it to him. We'll see—we'll see."

As he uttered the words, he placed the bird down on the child's bosom and called out—

"Brian, here's your present for you, that I promised you—won't you waken?—spake—open your blue eyes, achora machree, and look at the fine bird I brought you."

It was a most affecting little incident; for the contrast between the fiery scintillations that flashed from the eye of the noble bird, and the utter unbroken stillness of death, as its character was so mournfully impressed upon the fair sweet features of innocence, was indeed such as few parental hearts could withstand. Raymond looked awhile as if even he had been struck by it.

"Ah no," said he, going down to his mother; "no, Mary, he will never waken—and then what will you do for Brian's white head?"

"Whisht!" she replied; "whisht, and I'll sing you a song. I have nothing else to do now but to sing and be happy—

> "'Farewell father, farewell mother,
> Farewell friends, and farewell foes;
> I now will go and court some other,
> For love it was the causer of all my woes.'"

"An' so it was," she said; "for I did love some one, I think; but who they were, or where they are gone to, I cannot tell. Is your name," she added, her eye blazing as she spoke to Raymond, "is your name M'Clutchy?"

"Say it is," suggested one of the neighbors; "may be it may startle the poor thing into her senses."

"That's not very likely," replied another, "for it has startled her out of them—God in his mercy pity her!"

Raymond, however, adopted the first suggestion, without knowing why; and said in a loud voice—

"Ay is it; my name is Val the Vulture, that commands the blood-hounds."

The creature started—became for a moment as if convulsed—then proceeded at a speed that was incredible, screaming frightfully, across the dark and desolate scenery that surrounded the house. It was vain to pursue her; for there was none there capable of doing it with success, unless Raymond, who understood not that she had become insane.

CHAPTER IX.

A Dialogue, exhibiting Singular Principles of Justice—Solomon's Tracts and Triumph—A Sincere Convert—Darby's Views of Religion—Poll Doolin's Honesty—Solomon's Christian Generosity to a Man in Difficulty—M'Loughlin and his Family.

THE extraordinary scene which we have just detailed as occurring in the mountain hut, took place on Saturday morning and about twelve on the subsequent Monday, the following dialogue passed between honest Val and his son, Philip the graceful.

"That was a most unlucky accident that happened Harpur on Saturday," said Val, dryly, and looking with a good deal of significance at the other.

"Unlucky," said Phil, "faith and honor, my good father, I don't know what to think."

"You don't, Phil!" replied Val; "why, what the deuce could you deem more unlucky than to be shot stone dead, without a moment's notice."

Phil's color went a little at the bare notion of such a fate; but on observing an expression of peculiar complacency lurking in his father's eye, it returned again, and after a little assurance settled down into its original hue.

"To himself certainly," said Phil, "it was a bad business; no one can deny that."

"But, my excellent son, Phil, it may turn out a very lucky incident for us in the mean time. He is, Phil, a wise man in this world who can turn the misfortunes or crimes of others to his own advantage. There is Harman for instance, Phil; now I believe you are not excessively attached to him."

"I hate him as I do hell," replied Phil.

"Very good—you hate him as you do hell—well, on the other hand, there is M'Loughlin, his partner in the manufactory, and his joint lessee in their farm—now I hate him as I do—I was about to say the devil—but I feel loth to render that misrepresented gentleman an injustice—that is, if there *be* such a gentleman—which, with my worthy father, I much doubt. Don't you think now it is a fortunate thing that we can indict Harman for Harpur's murder. I really think, and it is said, he murdered him. We would include the priest in the indictment as accessory, but that might be attended with personal danger—and the less real danger we incur the better for ourselves."

"Faith and honor, father, that doctrine's worthy of an oracle — as, indeed, most of what you say is."

"But mark me, Phil; our object is simply his ruin, not his death. Let us beggar M'Loughlin and him, and drive them out of the country. No—no—not the death of either of them; on the contrary, I should wish them to live, if it was only that they might feel my revenge—and that I knew they felt it. I would not hang them if I could, for my own sake." He got pale, ground his teeth, knit his black beetle brow, and exhibited the diabolical cast of features for which he was remarkable whenever his evil passions began to stir in his heart.

"Now," said he to Phil, "keep a close mouth above all things, for we must proceed with caution. I have here a letter from Lord Cumber, in which, at my private suggestion, he declines to renew their leases. Indeed, on serious consideration, I have recently advised him to grant no renewals, except in cases where every reliance can be placed upon the principles of the parties. The want of a lease is a very wholesome restriction on the conduct of our enemies. M'Slime opposes me in this, because he cannot pocket as much as usual; but though I cannot readily break with him, still, I trust, that in a short time I shall be able to turn his flank in a manner for which he is but little prepared. I have reason to think he is tampering with O'Drive—in fact O'Drive told me as much—O'Drive, however, is at work for me, although honest Solomon does not suspect him. The pious attorney, who is bestowing more of his attention to religion than ever, has got bitten by the Conversion *mania*, and thinks he will be charged with a neglect of his gifts, as he calls them, unless he can produce a live convert actually made by his own hands. I accordingly suggested to O'Drive to consult him on some religious scruples that he is supposed to have felt from the perusal of a tract written by M'Slime himself.

"Why," said Phil, "are you not aware that he gave me three or four dozen of them for gratuitous distribution, as he calls it. Yes, it is called 'The Religious Attorney,' being a reconcilement between honesty and law, or a blessed union between light and darkness; by Solomon M'Slime, attorney at law.

"Which tract," continued Val, "was written for the sole purpose of recommending himself to the notice of the religious world aforesaid, more, by the way, as an attorney than as a Christian. And a very good speculation it proved, for, whereas he was then scarcely able to make both ends meet by mere professional roguery, and dressed in a black gown—which you know he always wears in court—yet he no sooner threw the cloak of religion over that, than he advanced rapidly—and the consequence is that he is now privately a usurious discounter of bills."

"Faith and honor, now, father, do you tell me so?"

"It's a fact, Philip, my son, and what is more—but the truth is, that neither he nor I can afford to quarrel with each other."

"Why, father? what's that 'more' you were going to add?"

"At this present time, Phil, it must be secret—but it is arranged between him and me, that he is to succeed Harman in Beleveen; whilst you are to come in for M'Loughlin's holding."

"For which I shall have the pleasure to drink your health to-night, my old boy—upon my honor and soul you are an excellent old cock, and I'm very proud of you."

"Go ahead, Phil; no nonsense. But stay, are those fellows of mine come yet?—I shall

receive their informations, and have Harman in the stone jug before night. It is a bad case of murder committed upon a man in the execution of the law, do you see, Phil, and consequently I cannot take bail."

"No, certainly not, captain—as Darby says, certainly not, plaise your worship—ha, ha, ha!"

"Come, Phil, keep quiet; it is now time that operations should seriously commence. I have gained most of my points, thank—Valentine M'Clutchy, at all events. I am head agent; you are my Deputy—master of an Orange Lodge—a Magistrate, and write J.P. after my name—Captain and Paymaster in the Castle Cumber cavalry, and you lieutenant; and though last, not least, thanks to my zeal and activity in the Protestant cause, I am at length a member of the Grand Panel of the county. Phil, my boy, there is nothing like religion and loyalty when well managed, but otherwise—"

"They are not worth a feather," replied Phil; "right, captain—there's an oracle again."

"And, Phil, my son, what is there wrong in this? In fact there is scarcely a better capital to trade on than religion and loyalty. You know what I mean, Phil;—not the *things*, if there *be* such things, which I must beg leave to doubt; but that principle which causes one man to hate another, in proportion to its influence over him."

"Ay," said Phil, "just as you and I, who have not got a touch of religion in our whole composition, have the character of being two of the staunchest Protestants in the county."

"Yes," replied the father, "and in this case the fiction is as good and better than the truth. The fiction, Phil, under which our religion appears is our own interests—no, I am wrong—the fiction under which our interest appears is our religion—that is the way of it; and the truth is, Phil, that ninety-nine men out of every hundred will go ninety-nine miles for their interests, before they will go one for either religion or truth—that's the way of it, too. However, pass that—now about Poll Doolin and the hint I gave you?"

"Why, you know at that time matters were not ripe for it. Don't you remember telling me so yourself?"

"I do, but I speak of your present intentions."

"Faith, my present intentions would be to marry the girl, Papist though she be, if I could; but as that's out of the question, I will now follow up your hint."

"Then you had better see Poll, and go on with it. Are you aware, besides, that the concern is tottering?"

"The manufactory? No—is that possible?"

"It is a fact; but you know not how honest Solomon and I have been at work. It is tottering, Lieutenant M'Clutchy, and in a short time you will see what you shall see."

"Well," said Phil, "so far everything is turning out very fortunate for us—but I think, Captain, that you are one of those men who are born under what they call a lucky planet;—eh? old boy?"

"Well, I think so; but in the meantime see Poll Doolin, and after that pay a visit to my father. The old scoundrel is upon his last legs, and there can be no harm in paying him some attention now. You are not a favorite of his; so smooth him down as much as you can. I don't myself expect that he will remember either of us in his will; but, as he is hasty and capricious, it is difficult to say what effect a favorable impression might have upon him."

"Neither are *you* a favorite with Isabel, or Jezabel, as he calls her."

"No, I made a bad move there—but, after all, what did I, or rather, what could I lose by neglecting her? Did she not succeed in banishing every one of his relatives from about him? It was neither her interest nor her inclination to keep in with his friends:—go and see him, at all events: reconnoitre, and report accordingly—and now if these fellows are come let them be sent in."

Phil accordingly withdrew to follow up his own speculations, and in a few minutes our friends, who so bravely distinguished themselves in the widow's cabin, entered the office.

Val, like most men of his class and experience, was forced to undergo strong contests between the vanity occasioned by his success in life, and his own shrewd sense and acute perception of character. Whenever he could indulge that vanity without allowing its gratification to be perceived by others, he always did so; but if he happened to have a person to deal with, whom he suspected of a sufficiently keen penetration, his own sagacity always checked its display. No man ever puzzled him so thoroughly as O'Drive, who so varied and timed his flattery, as to keep him in a state of perpetual alternation between a perception of the fellow's knavery, and a belief in his simplicity of heart. On one occasion he would exclaim to himself or Phil, "This O'Drive is a desperate knave,—it's impossible that he can be honest;" and again, "Well, well; there is too much simplicity there, too much truth unnecessarily told, to allow me to consider that poor devil a rogue—no, he is honest." The consequence was, that Darby flattered him, and he relished it so strongly because he did not imagine

it was intentional, that Darby understood his weak points, in that respect, better than any man living. This, in a country where the people are shrewd observers in general, could scarcely be supposed to escape their observation; nor did it. Darby's manner was so naturally imitated by others, that even the keen and vigilant Valentine M'Clutchy was frequently over-reached without being at all conscious of the fact.

When the men of the Castle Cumber corps came in, they found their captain sitting, or rather lolling, in a deep-seated arm-chair, dressed in a morning-gown and red morocco slippers. He was, or appeared to be, deeply engaged over a pile of papers, parchments, and letters, and for about a minute raised not his head. At length he drew a long breath, and exclaimed in a soliloquy—"just so, my lord, just so; every man that scruples to support the Protestant interests will meet no countenance from you;—'nor shall he, Mr. M'Clutchy, from you, as my representative,' you add—'and I beg you'"—he went on to read a few lines further—"'to transmit me the names and capacities of all those who are duly active on my property in suppressing disturbance, convicting criminals, and preserving the peace; especially those who are remarkable for loyal and constitutional principles; such are the men we will cherish, such are the men we must and ought to serve." It is very true, my lord, it is very true indeed, and—'oh! my friends, I beg your pardon! I hadn't noticed you—oh, dear me! how is this? why I didn't imagine you had been so sadly abused as all this comes to—this is dreadful, and all in resisting the king's warrant against the murderer. But how did it happen that this Harman murdered our poor friend Harpur?"

"Harpur is done for, captain, sure enough; there's no doubt of that."

"Well, it's one comfort that we live in a country where there is justice, my friends. Of course you will prosecute him for this diabolical murder; I sent for you to receive your informations, and we shall lodge him in gaol before night."

"I would rather prosecute that Blackguard Rimon-a-hattha," said a man, whose head was awfully swollen, and bound up with a handkerchief, "Rimon, Captain, is the greatest rascal of the two—he is, by, Japurs."

"Yes, but is he not an idiot, Johnston? In point of law he is only a fiction, and cannot be prosecuted."

"Fiction, Captain! Sowl, I don't know what you call a fiction—but if I'm guessin' properly, hell to the much of it was in his blows—look at how my head is, and I wish you could see my ribs, plase your worship."

"Well but let us come to the most important matter first—and before I go further, my friends and brothers, I would just throw out for your satisfaction a few observations that I wish to impress upon you. Recollect that in this business, and in every business like it, you must have the pleasure at least of reflecting that you have now a magistrate who will see that all due care is taken of your interests—who will accompany your proceedings step by step, and see that all is as it ought to be. That is not partiality, my dear friends; that is not favor nor affection, nor leaning *to* you; no, nor—ha, ha, ha, leaning *from* you, either, my friends."

"Long life to your worship! Long life to you, Captain! You're the right sort, and no mistake."

"M'Dowel, what detained you from your lodge on Thursday night."

"I was buying a springer in Rush fair, and didn't get home in time, your worship."

"Well, M'Dowel, mark me,—I neither can, nor will, overlook neglect in these matters. The man that neglects them wilfully, is a man I won't depend upon—and two of your neighbors were absent from parade on Wednesday week. Now, it's really too bad to expect that I, or any other gentleman in the country, will exert ourselves so strenuously to sustain and extend our own principles, or to speak plainly, to keep them up—to maintain our ascendancy,—if we cannot reckon upon the earnest and cordial support of those for whose sake we take all this trouble—upon my honor it's a shame."

"It *is* a shame, Captain, and I say here's one," placing his hand upon his heart, "of the right kidney. By the holy William, there is."

"We're all so, your worship," replied Sharpe, "and sure every one knows it—but, plaise your honor, what's to be done about Harman?"

"Why, prosecute him for the murder of course."

"But then," said one of them, "sure Harman didn't murder him, Captain—among ourselves, it was all accident."

M'Clutchy seemed surprised at this, and after hearing their individual opinions, which, indeed, conflicted very much, some positively asserting that he did, and others that he did not, murder the man, he began to view the matter in a somewhat different and more cautious light. He mused for some time, however, and after a second and more deliberate investigation, finding that there were two for the murder and only one against it, he at length took their informations, resolving to bring the matter to trial at all hazards. The warrant for Harman's appre-

hension was accordingly issued, and entrusted to a dozen of the most resolute fellows in his corps; who so far enabled our magistrate to fulfil his intention, that they lodged his enemy in the county prison that very night.

The next morning, when reading the papers, our Captain was not a little surprised at reading in one of them an advertisement to the following effect: —

"To the public—found, in the office of Mr. Solomon M'Slime, a Bank of Ireland Note, of large amount. The person losing it may have it by giving a proper description of same, and paying the expenses of this advertisement. N. B.—It is expected, as the loser of the note must be in affluent circumstances, that he will, from principles of Christian sympathy, contribute, or enable some Christian friend to contribute, a moderate donation to some of our greatest public charities. Thus will that which at the first view appears to be serious calamity, be made, under Him, a blessing and a consolation, not only to the wealthy individual who lost the money, but to some of our destitute fellow creatures. This, however, is not named as a condition, but merely as a suggestion offered from motives of benignity and duty.

"Also, just published, *The Religious Attorney;* being a reconcilement between Honesty and Law; or a blessed Union between Light and Darkness. By S. M'S. Tenth Thousand.

"Also, in the Press, and will soon be published, done up neatly in foolscap, and rogue's binding for cheapness, by the same author, *The Converted Bailiff;* being designed as a companion to *The Religious Attorney.* These productions need not be sought for with any of the profane booksellers of the city; but only at the Religious Depositories, or at those godly establishments in Sackville street and College green."

This, however, was not all. In a different column appeared the following; which, however, did not surprise M'Clutchy:—

"*Glorious Triumph of Religious Truth.*

"In another part of our paper, our readers will perceive in an advertisement, an additional proof, if such were necessary, of the strong integrity of that ornament of his profession, both as an Attorney and Christian, Mr. Solomon M'Slime. This gentleman, whilst he devotes himself, with a pure and guileless heart, to the extensive practice which his high principles and great skill have gained him in his profession, does not neglect the still higher and more important interests of himself and his fellow creatures. It is a gracious thing to know that a spirit of deep and earnest inquiry is now abroad, by which hundreds are, under God, brought from darkness to light—from the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, out into the freedom of perfect day. Verily there is a new Reformation abroad — the strongholds of Popery are fast falling one after another. In the neighborhood of Mount-starve-'em, the spirit has been poured out most abundantly; and this manifestation is the more gracious, when we reflect that the dreadful famine which now prevails throughout the country, has been made (always under Him) the precious but trying means of bringing the poor benighted creatures to taste the fruits of a better faith. Nothing, indeed, can equal the bounty of that excellent nobleman, Lord ——, who supplies beef and blankets—Bibles and bread—to those who may be likened to the multitude that were fed so miraculously in the wilderness—that is to say, who followed the good shepherd for his doctrine, and were filled with bread. Mr. M'Slime, who has within his own humble sphere not been inactive, can boast at least of having plucked one brand out of the burning, in the person of Darby O'Drive, the respectable bailiff of Valentine M'Clutchy, Esq., the benevolent agent of the Castle Cumber estate—to which Mr. M'Slime himself is law agent. It is understood that on next Sabbath (D.V.) Mr. O'Drive will make a public profession of his faith—or, in other words, "that he will recant the errors of Popery, and embrace those of Protestantism."* The merit of his conversion is due —but merit there is none—to Mr. M'Slime, or rather to his two very popular and searching tracts, called, 'Spiritual Food for Babes of Grace,' and 'The Religious Attorney,' which he had placed for perusal in Mr. O'Drive's hands. Mr. O'Drive now declares himself a Babe of Grace, and free from the bonds of sin; or, as he more simply, but truthfully and characteristically expresses it —a beautiful specimen indeed of his simplicity of views—'he is replevined from the pound of human frailty—no longer likely to be brought to the devil's auction, or knocked down to Satan as a bad bargain.'— For ourselves, we cannot help thinking that this undoubted triumph of religious truth, in the person of Darby O'Drive, is as creditable to the zeal of Mr. M'Slime, as it is to his sincerity. Encouraged by this great success, Mr. M'Slime, seconded by several of our leading controversialists, has succeeded in getting up

* This expression has been attributed to Faulkner, the printer of Swift's works; but it is much more likely that it belongs to the Dean himself.

a polemical discussion, on the merits of the Protestant and Popish creeds. The particulars have not been decided upon, but they shall probably appear in an early number of our paper. In the meantime we are authorized by Mr. Darby O'Drive to issue a formal challenge to any Popish and idolatrous bailiff in Ireland, to discuss with him the relative powers, warrants, processes, triumphs, conflagrations, and executions of their respective churches."

He had scarcely finished this characteristic paragraph, when O'Drive's knock, as usual, was heard, and in a few minutes the redoubted champion and challenger entered. There was a knavish demureness about him, and a kind of comic solemnity in his small, cunning gray eye, that no painter could copy.

"Why, you scoundrel," said Val, "you're overdoing the thing altogether; is it possible that M'Slime is such a spooney as not to see through you?"

"Ah, Captain, you don't make any allowance for my simplicity; sure you know, sir, I must grow young and innocent, if I'm to become a *babe of grace*, your worship."

"But what's the meaning of all this work about discussions and such stuff?"

"Faith, sir, it's all thrue enough at any rate; we're to have a religious field day here in the Sessions house of Castle Cumber; the whole thing is regulated—the seconds, and bottle houlders, and all is appointed. There's the Rev. Christopher Gammon, Rev. Vesuvius M'Slug, who's powerful against Popery, the Rev. Bernard Brimstone, and the Rev. Phineas Lucre, with many more on the side of truth. On that of Popery and falsehood there's the Rev. Father M'Stake, the Rev. Father O'Flary, the Rev. Father M'Fire, and the Rev. Nicholas O'Scorch, D.D. Dr. Sombre is to be second on our side; and Father M'Fud on the part of Popery and idolatry."

"And when is this precious spouting match to take place, you rascal?"

"Why, sir, on Monday week; and on next Sunday, sir, I'm to read my rekintation, plaise God."

"But I didn't intend that you should go to such lengths as that—however, that's your own affair."

"But, Captain ahagur, sure it's on your account I'm doin' it—won't it enable me to get the blind side of him about one or two things we want to come at."

"Indeed, I believe certainly, that if he has a blind side at all, it is his own hypocrisy."

"Be my soul, and it'll go hard or we'll worm out the sacret we want. There is one thing I'm sartin of, he thinks, now that I'm turnin' by the way, that I'm ready to desart and desave you, Captain, an' indeed he says many things of you that he ought not to say."

"Let us hear them."

"Why, sir, he said the other day—but sorra one o' me likes to be repeatin' these things."

"Come, come, you rascal, out with it."

"He said, sir, that he feared the divil had a hard howlt o' you—that was the day I brought him the last letter, sir—that your heart, Captain, was full o' desate, and damnably wicked, plase your worship, and that if you didn't improve your morals you'd go where there is—something about gnashing of teeth, your honor."

"He's a double distilled scoundrel," replied Val, bitterly, "and although I know him well, I am determined still to know him better."

"Double distilled!—ay, faith, rectified many degrees above proof; but never mind; if I don't put a spoke in his wheel, I'm not here."

"Well, never mind now, either—give the hypocritical little scoundrel this letter."

"I will, and thank you, Captain! God bless your honor, and grant you 'long to reign over us, happy and glorious, God save the king! amin.' You see, captain, I've the right strain of loyalty in me, any how, ha, ha, ha! Throth, if I ever change in airnest, it isn't among the yallow bellies I'll go; but into his majesty's own church, Captain Val—the brave church where they have the bells, and the big blessed lookin' bishops, and their organs and coaches; aye, faith, and where everything is dacent and jintlemanly. Sure blood alive, Captain Val, beggin' your pardon, what's the use of a religion if it's not respectable and ginteel? What signifies a ministher of any religion, if he hasn't a fat purse in his pocket, and a good round belly before him, for that shows, plaise your worship, that religion is more than a name, any how; an' upon my conscience—oh, holy Moses, Captain Val, if M'Slime was to hear me swearin' this way! God pardon me! howandever, but upon my conscience, it isn't the religion that keeps a man poor, but the religion that puts the flesh on his bones, and keeps it there, that is the right one—aye, and not only that, but that keeps a good coat on his back, your honor, and a good pair of breeches to his posterals—for which raison, whenever I do *sariously* turn it'll be—but you may guess—it'll be to the only true and loyal church;—for when a man can get both fat, and loyal, and religious, all at one move, he's a confounded fool that won't become religious."

This certainly, though not intended for it, was a true and bitter comment upon the

principles of such men as M'Clutchy, who considered a profane and licentious attachment to a mere Establishment as a high duty, not because that establishment was the exponent of divine truth, but of a mere political symbol, adopted by subordinate and secular aids, to bind men of the same principles together.

"Begone, you rascal, and confound your dissertation. Go and deliver the letter, as I desired you, and bring me an answer."

"Sartinly, Captain, and will have an eye about me, into the bargain. How is Captain Phil, sir, before I go?"

M'Clutchy made a motion of indignation, but could not, in the meantime, altogether repress a smile; and Darby, taking his hat with a kind of shrewd and confidential grin, ran out of the office.

Our narrative now passes to the house of Poll Doolin, which was situated in a row of cottages towards the north side of Castle Cumber. Her son Raymond and she were its only inmates, and the former was in the act of replacing a hat among the *tria juncta in uno*, which he always wore.

"Raymond," said his mother, "now that you've got your supper, you must keep house till I come back."

"Must I indeed?—why must I? answer me that, there now, that's one."

"Becase I'm goin' out on business."

"What business?—where to?—what brought Phil M'Clutchy here yestherday?—tell me that—eh?"

"Oh, I couldn't tell you that, Raymond."

"Don't do anything for Phil, he's Val's son, that keeps the blood-hounds. Ah, poor Brian, and his white head—no, he'll never waken—never waken—an' what has she now to look at! Mother, I'd give all the cocks I ever had to see him and his white head in his mother's arms again—God's curse on Val! God's curse on him! I hate him—I hate Phil—I hate all of them—don't mother; do nothing for them."

"You foolish boy, what do you know about it?—keep the house till I come back, and I'll bring you a pennyworth of tobaccy?"

"But you will go?" said Raymond.

"I must, you fool."

"Very well, then, take it out o' that—there now, that's one."

It was now drawing on towards dusk, and Poll, assuming her black bonnet, and throwing her black cloak about her shoulders, sallied out with that furtive air which always accompanies one who is conscious of something that requires concealment. Her motions always were rapid, but on this occasion she walked like one whose mind brooded over difficulties—sometimes she went very quick, then slackened her pace, and once or twice stood still, musing with her right hand to her chin. At length she reached the residence of Brian M'Loughlin, just after night had set it—she entered not, but glided about the house, waited, watched, listened, and peeped into the house, very like a thief that was setting the premises. Ultimately she took her stand at a particular window in the rear of the building, where she kept watch with great patience, though for what purpose it would appear very difficult to guess. Patience, however, is often rewarded, and it was so in the case before us. After about half an hour a light fell through the glass, and Poll, availing herself of the opportunity, tapped gently: at first it was not noticed, and she tapped again, somewhat louder; this was successful—a gentle voice inquired in tones more of surprise than alarm, "who is there, and what is your business!"

"A friend," said Poll.

"Poll Doolin!"

"The same, and I'm here on a case of life and death. Could you come out for a start—three minutes will do."

"Certainly not—you trifled unnecessarily with my feelings before—I will have no more mysteries. I can raise the window, however, and anything you have to say can be said where we stand." She raised the sash as she spoke. "Now," said she, "what is your business, Poll?"

"Life and death, as I said," replied Poll. "Do you not know that Mr. Harman is to be tried for murder, and that the assizes will open in a few days?"

"Unfortunately I do," replied Mary, sighing deeply, "but there can be no doubt of his acquittal. Father Roche has been here, who was present, and told us how the whole circumstance occurred."

"I don't doubt that," said Poll, "but this I tell you, and this you may rely on, that hang he will, in spite of fate; he's doomed."

"Great God!" exclaimed the now terrified girl, "you chill the blood in my veins—doomed!—what do you mean, Poll?"

"M'Clutchy will have him hanged in spite of all opposition—you know his power now—he can carry everything his own way."

"I know," replied the other, "that his influence is unfortunately great, no doubt, and cruelly is it exercised; but still, I don't know that he can carry everything his own way."

"Do you know what packing a jury means?"

"Alas!" replied Mary, starting, and getting pale, "I do indeed, Poll. I have heard of it too frequently."

"What, then, has the Vulture, the blood-

hound, to do, but to get twelve Orangemen upon the jury, and the work is done?"

The unhappy girl burst into tears, and wrung her hands, for, however questionable the veracity of her present informant, she knew, from the unfortunate circumstances of the country, that such corrupt influences had too frequently been exerted.

"Don't you know," added Poll, "that the thing can be done? Isn't the sheriff himself an Orangeman—isn't the sub-sheriff an Orangeman—isn't the grand jury Orange, aren't they all Orange through other?"

"I believe so, indeed," said Mary, still weeping bitterly, "and there is, I fear, little or no hope."

"Well, but," replied Poll, "what if I could give you hope?"

"You, Poll, what can you mean? You!"

"Yes, me," said Poll, "poor as I stand here now."

"Well, but how?"

"Through them that can turn old Val the Vulture round their finger. What do you think brought me here—or who do you think sent me? Don't you know that I have no raison to like a bone in the skin of one o' your family, and that it's more, of coorse, to plaise others than myself that I'm here; but, over and above that, you, Miss M'Loughlin, never offended or injured me, and I'm willin' to sarve you in this business, if you will sarve yourself."

"But, how—but, how?" replied the distracted girl, "only tell me how?"

"There is one, and only one, that can twist Val round his finger, and in this same business is willing to do so—and that one is his own son, Phil."

Mary stood for a moment without even breathing; indeed, she exhibited strong symptoms of disgust at his very name.

"He is a person I detest," she replied, "beyond any human creature."

"That may be," said Poll, "but still he can save the man that is to be your husband; and that's what you ought to think of—the time is short now, and the loss of a day may ruin all. Listen Miss M'Loughlin:—Mr. Phil desired me to say to you, that if you will allow him a few minutes' conversation with you behind the garden, about dusk or a little after it, he'll satisfy you that he can and will save him—but it *must* be on the condition of seeing you, as I say."

"Let him be generous," she replied, "and impose no such condition."

"He won't interfare on any other terms," replied Poll; "he knows, it seems, that you have an unfavorable opinion of him, and he wishes to prove to you that he doesn't desarve it."

Mary paused for some time, and appeared very much distressed. I fear, thought she, it is selfish in me to think of my own feelings, or to have a moment's hesitation in sacrificing them to his safety. It is certainly a disgusting task to meet this man; but what ought I not to do, consistent with conscious rectitude of motive, to save my dear Harman's life, for I fear the circumstances come to that.

"Well, then, Poll, if I meet this man, mark me, it is solely for the purpose of striving to save Mr. Harman's life; and observe, because Mr. M'Clutchy is ungenerous enough to make my meeting him the condition of his interference."

"That," said Poll, "is for yourself to consider; but surely you would be a strange girl, if you refused to meet him for such a purpose. That would be a quare way of showing your love to Mr. Harman."

"I shall meet him, then," said Mary, "at the stile behind the garden; and may God direct and protect me in what I purpose!"

Poll gave no *amen* to this, as it might be supposed she would have done, but simply said—

"I'm glad, Miss M'Loughlin, that you're doin' what you are doin'. It'll be a comfort maybe to yourself to reflect on it hereafther. Good night, Miss."

Mary bade her good night, and after closing the shutters of her room which she had come to do, retired; and with an anxious heart returned to the parlor.

M'Loughlin's family consisted of three sons and but one daughter, Mary, with whom our readers are already acquainted. The eldest, James, was a fine young man of twenty-three; the second, Tom, was younger than Mary, who then was entering her twenty-first; and the youngest, called Brian, after his father, was only eighteen. The honest fellow's brow was clouded with a deep expression of melancholy, and he sat for some time silent after Mary's return to the parlor. At length he said in a kind of soliloquy—

"I wish, *Raymond-na-hattha*, you had been behind the Slievbeen Mountains that bitter morning you came for James Harman!"

"If he had," said Tom, "poor James wouldn't be where he is to-night."

"But I hope, father," said Mary, in a voice which though it trembled a little, yet expressed a certain portion of confidence—"I hope as it was an accident, that there will not be any serious risk."

"I would be sorry to take any hope out of your heart that's in it, Mary; but, still, I can't forget that Val the Vulture's his bitterest enemy—and we all know what he's capable of doing. His son, too, graceful Phil, is still worse against him than the father, espe-

cially ever since Harman pulled his nose for what he said of Mary here. Did I ever mention it to you?"

"No, sir," replied Mary, coloring without exactly knowing why, "you never did."

"I was present," said young Brian, "but it wasn't so much for what he said, for he got afraid, but *the way he looked.*"

"The scoundrel," said James, indignantly, "well Brian—"

"'Twas at the Ball Alley," proceeded the young fellow, "in Castle Cumber; Mary was passing homewards, and Phil was speaking to long Tom Sharpe, father to one of the blood-hounds. 'That's a purty girl,' said Sharpe, 'who is she?' 'Oh,' says Phil, 'an acquaintance of mine—but I can say no more—honor bright,' and he winked one of his squinting eyes as he spoke. James Harman who was standing behind him stepped forward, 'but I can say more,' said he, 'she's daughter to Brian M'Loughlin, and *no acquaintance of yours*—and what is more, never will be; ay, and what is more,' said James, 'here's a proof of it;' and as he spoke he pulled Phil's proboscis, and then wiped his fingers in his purty face. 'Now, you cowardly scoundrel,' he added, 'let that teach you not to speak of any respectable female in such a tone, or to claim an acquaintance where you have it not.'"

"Never mind, my good fellow," said Phil, "I'll make you smoke for this."

"You know where I'm to be found," said James, "and your remedy too; but you haven't the spirit to take it like a man—and so I leave you with the white feather in your cap."

This anecdote for various reasons distressed Mary beyond relief. It increased her detestation of young M'Clutchy to the highest possible pitch, and rendered the very thought of him doubly odious to her heart. Her understanding became bewildered, and for a while she knew not what she said or did. Taking a candle and attempting to conceal her agitation, she withdrew again to her own room, where she sat for nearly half an hour endeavoring to shape her tumultuous thoughts into something of clearness and order.

M'Loughlin's brow, however, after her departure, still remained clouded. "Misfortunes they say," said he, "never come single; here is our lease out, and we will not get a renewal notwithstanding the fine we offered—and to mend the matter some good friend has spread a report that the firm of M'Loughlin and Harman is unsafe. Our creditors are coming down upon us fast—but it's the way of the world, every one striving to keep himself safe. If these men were not set upon us by some coward in the dark, there would be neither loss nor risk to them nor to us; but if they press on us out of the usual course, I fear we won't be able to stand it. Then poor Harman, too! heighonee!"

After some further conversation, in which it was clear that M'Clutchy's and M'Slime's manœuvres had begun to develop themselves, Mary rejoined them. Her countenance on her return was evidently more composed, and impressed with a more decided, perhaps we should say, determined character. She had made her mind up. M'Clutchy, junior, was no doubt one of the most detestable of men, but as she knew that she hated him, and felt a perfect consciousness of all that was truthful, and pure, and cautious in herself, she came once more to the resolution of sacrificing her own disgust to the noble object of saving her lover. Besides, it was by no means an unreasonable hope on her part; for such was the state of party and political feeling at the time, that wiser and more experienced heads would have calculated rightly, and calculated as she did.

"Father," said she, on returning to the parlor, "don't be cast down too much about Harman—I think, considering everything, that his case is far from being hopeless. There is Father Roche—as for poor Mary O'Regan, in consequence of her insanity, she unfortunately can be of no use—and one of the blood-hounds are against the two others. Now, two to two, is surely strong evidence in his favor."

She did not, however, make the slightest allusion to the grounds on which she actually did rest her hope—that is to say, on Phil's influence over his father.

M'Loughlin was glad to see that her spirits were so much more improved than they had been; and so far from uttering anything calculated to depress them, he appeared to feel much more easy in his mind than before—and, perhaps, actually did so.

"Well," said he to his wife, who was a woman of few words but deep feeling; "Kathleen, will you see that we get a glass of punch—the boys and I; there can be no harm surely in drinking a ——; but it's time enough to drink it when we see the liquor before us. Mary, avourneen, as you are activer than your mother, will you undertake that duty?—do, avillish machree."

In a few minutes Mary quietly but actively had the decanter, sugar, and hot water before them; and Brian, having mixed a tumbler for himself, and shoved the materials over to his two eldest boys, resumed the conversation.

"Come, boys; are you mixed?"

"All ready, sir."

"Well, here's that James Harman may triumph over his enemies!"

This was drank, we need not say, with an anxious and sincere heart.

"Do you know now," said M'Loughlin, "that I think there's a very great difference between little M'Slime, and that Vulture of hell, M'Clutchy. The little fellow came riding past to-day, and seeing me in the field, he beckoned to me:—

"'I hope,' says he, 'that certain reports, which I was sorry to hear of, are unfounded?'

"'What reports, Mr. M'Slime?' says I to him.

"'Why,' said he, 'it is not out of idle curiosity that I make the inquiry, but I trust from better and more Christian motives;' and, upon my conscience, the little fellow turned up his eyes towards heaven, in a way that would shame Father Roche himself. Faith, if there wasn't truth there, I don't know where you could get it. 'The reports I speak of,' says he, 'touch the solvency of your firm.'

"'Able to pay fifty shillings in a pound,' said I, not willing to encourage the outcry.

"'I'm delighted to hear it,' says generous little Solomon; 'but all I have to say is, that if it had been otherwise, or should it actually be otherwise, so far as a few hundred pounds go, you may draw upon a man—a sinner—a frail mortal and an unworthy—named Solomon M'Slime. This,' he went on, 'is not mere worldly friendship, Mr. M'Loughlin, that promises much until the necessity arrives, and then do all such promises flee as it were into the wilderness. No, my friend,' says the warm-hearted little saint, 'no my friend, these offers are founded not on my own strength, so to say, but upon those blessed precepts, Mr. M'Loughlin, which teach us to love our neighbors as ourselves—and to do unto others even as we wish they should do unto us.' He squeezed my hand, and whispered in my ear—'As far as three hundred pounds go, should you require it, rely on me; but harkee,' says he, 'and now,'—well, here's his health—'and now,' says he, 'and now,'—oh! I knew he was in earnest—'and now,' says he, 'one word with you—I trust—I hope, I may say, that I am a Christian man, who would not speak aught against my neighbor; but this, out of a principle of Christian kindness, I *will* say;—beware of Valentine M'Clutchy. It is known *there!*' said he, pointing his finger, and turning up his eyes to heaven—'it is known *there* from what motives I speak this. I am glad I saw thee—peace be with thee—farewell, and do not despise or overlook my services, or my poor sinful offers.'"

"Now," said the simple-minded but upright and unsuspicious man, "I do say that was no every-day offer. I would be glad to hear M'Clutchy make such an offer to any man—for which reason here's little Solomon's health once more, and long life to him!"

CHAPTER X.

A Dutiful Grandson and a Respectable Grandmother — Military Dialogue — Disobedience of Orders—Solomon's Candor—A Confidential Communication—Solomon Dances the Swaggering Jig —Honest Correspondence — Darby's Notion of Spiritual Things—Two Religions Better than One —Darby's Love of Truth.

We believe our readers may understand, that although we have ourselves taken the liberty of insinuating that little Solomon, as M'Loughlin called him, was not precisely—but we beg pardon, it is time enough to speak of that yet. All we have to say in the mean time is, that Solomon's character, up to the period we speak of, was not merely spotless, but a burning and a shining light in the eyes of all the saints and sinners of the religious world, not only in Castle Cumber, but in the metropolis itself. Solomon was an Elder of his congregation, in which Sabbath after Sabbath he took his usual prominent part as collector—raised the psalms—sang loudest—and whenever the minister alluded to the mercy that was extended to sinners, Solomon's groan of humility—of sympathy with the frail, and of despair for the impenitent; his groan, we say, under these varied intimations of Gospel truth, was more than a sermon in itself. It not only proclaimed to the whole congregation that he was a sinner, but that he felt for sinners—rejoiced in their repentance, which he often did in a nondescript scream, between a groan and a cackle of holy joy, that alarmed the congregation; but also wept for their hardness of heart, when he imagined that it was likely to terminate in final reprobation, with such a pathetic fervency, that on many such occasions some of those who sat beside him were obliged to whisper—"Brother M'Slime, you are too much overcome—too piously excited—do not allow yourself to exhibit such an excess of Christian sympathy, or there will be many instances among the weaker vessels of relapses and backslidings, from not understanding that it is more for others thou art feeling than for thyself."

Solomon then took his hands from before his face, wiped his eyes with his handkerchief on which they had been embedded, and with a serene and rather heavenly counte-

nance looked up to the preacher, then closing his eyes as if in a state of ethereal enjoyment, he clasped his hands with a sweet smile, twirling his thumbs and bowing his head, as the speaker closed every paragraph of the discourse.

These observations account very plainly for the opinions touching Solomon which were expressed by M'Loughlin. Solomon was at this time an unadulterated saint—a professor—in fact one of the elect who had cast his anchor sure. But as the proverb says, time will tell.

That night M'Loughlin and his family retired to bed for the first time overshadowed, as it were, by a gloomy presentiment of some change, which disturbed and depressed their hearts. They slept, however, in peace and tranquillity, free from those snake-like pangs which coil themselves around guilt, and deaden its tendencies to remorse, whilst they envenom its baser and blacker purposes.

M'Slime himself at this crisis was beginning privately to feel some of the very natural consequences of his own oft acknowledged frailty. Phil, who had just left Constitution Cottage a few minutes before Darby's arrival, had not seen him that morning. The day before he had called upon his grandfather, who told him out of the parlor window to "go to h——; you may call to-morrow, you cowardly whelp, if you wish to see me—but in the meantime," he added as before, "go where I desired you."

Phil, who possessed a great deal of his father's selfishness and also of his low cunning, but none at all of his ability, turned back indignantly and rode home again. He had not passed more than about a hundred yards from the avenue out into the highway, when he met Sharpe, one of the heroes of the cabin.

We shall not detail their conversation, which, of course, embraced many of the circumstances connected with their duties, excepting a few interjectional imprecations which Phil in an occasional parenthesis dutifully bestowed upon his grandfather.

"So, Sharpe, the fool Rimon made such a devil of a fight (the infernal old scoundrel) —and took the gun."

"Why, Captain Phil, if he hasn't the strength of ten men, I'll never manœuvre on parade while I live—he's a bloody rascal."

"(A double distilled old scoundrel, and I wish the devil had him,)—he's a bad bird, Sharpe, fool and all as he is, there's no doubt of that. What did the priest do?"

"Why, your honor, I can't say that he took much part in it, barrin' once that he went between us and the woman."

"He had no right to do that—(the blaspheming old vagabond,)—none at all, Sharpe, and he ought to be prosecuted."

"He ought, Captain, and will, I hope."

"But then, Sharpe, if we swing Harman it will be enough, for Harman—(he'll fiz for it, and that soon I hope)—is another bad bird."

"Oh, devil a worse, Captain, but even if he escapes us now, we'll manage him yet."

They now came to a turn in the road, and found themselves at a bridge, a little beyond which two roads met. On approaching, they observed an old woman sitting on a large stone that lay a little beyond the arch. She was meagrely and poorly dressed, had no cap on, her gray locks were only bound by a red ribbon that encircled her head, but did not confine her hair, which floated in large masses about her shoulders, a circumstance that added to the startling vehemence of character that appeared in her face, and gave to her whole person an expression which could not be overlooked. When they had come up to where she sat, and were about to pass without further notice, she started up, and with steps surprisingly rapid, and full of energy, seized upon Phil's bridle.

"Well!" she exclaimed, "I saw you going, and I see you coming, but you cannot tell me that he is dead. No, the death damp of his blaspheming carcase is not yet on the air, because if it was," and she turned her nose against the wind, like a hound, "I would snuff it. No, no; he is not gone, but he will soon go, and what a catalogue of crimes will follow after him! The man's conscience is a gaol where every thought and wish of his guilty life and godless heart is a felon; and the blackest calendar that ever was spread before God was his. Oh! I wonder do the chains in his conscience rattle? they do, but his ears are deaf, and he doesn't hear them; but he will, and feel them too, yet."

Phil, who had got alarmed at the extraordinary energy of her manner, as well as of her language, said, "what do you want, and who are you speaking of?"

"Who am I speaking of? who should I be speaking of but of old Deaker, the blasphemer?—and who am I speaking to but the son of the ungodly villain who threatened to horsewhip the mother that bore him. Do you know me now?"

"Let go my bridle," exclaimed Phil, "let go my bridle, you old faggot, or upon my honor and soul I'll give you a cut of my whip."

"No," she replied, no whit daunted, "no, I'm near my eightieth year. I'm old, and wrinkled, and gray—my memory forgets everything now but my own crimes, and the

crimes of those that are still worse than myself—old I am, and wicked, and unrepenting—but I shall yet live to pour the curses that rise out of an ill-spent life into his dying ear, until his very soul will feel the scorches of perdition before its everlasting tortures come upon it in hell. I am old," she proceeded, "but I will yet live to see the son that cursed his mother, and threatened to raise his sacrilegious hand against her that bore him, laid down like a tree, rooted up and lopped—lying like a rotten log, without sap, without strength, and only fit to be cut up and cast into the fire. I am old," she replied, "but I shall live to see out the guilty race of you all."

"Go to the devil, you croaking old vagabond," exclaimed Phil, raising his whip, and letting it fall upon her almost naked shoulders, with a force as unmanly, as it was cruel, and impious, and shocking.

She uttered a scream of anguish, and writhed several times, until her eyes became filled with tears. "My cup is not full yet," she exclaimed, sobbing, "neither is yours, but it soon will be, you knew me well when you gave that blow; but go now, and see how you'll prosper after it."

Sharpe, even Sharpe, felt shocked at the cowardly spirit which could inflict such an outrage upon old age, under any circumstances; but much less under those which even he understood so well.

"Captain," said he, "if it was only for the credit of the Castle Cumber cavalry, I'm sorry that you gave that blow; those men on the other side of the road there were looking at you, and you may take my word it will spread."

"How dare you speak to me in that style?" asked Phil in a rage, and availing himself of his authority over him, "what is it your business, Sharpe? Sharpe, you're a scoundrel for speaking to me in this style—damn my honor and blood, but you are. What do you know about that old vagabond?"

"Captain," said Sharpe, who was a sturdy fellow in his way, "I'm no scoundrel; and I do know that you have just horsewhipped your notorious ould grandmother."

"Fall back," said Phil, "and consider yourself arrested."

"Arrest and be hanged," replied Sharpe, "I don't care a fig about you—I was in Deaker's corps this many a year, and if you attempt to come the officer over me, let me tell you you're mistaken. We're not on duty now, my buck, and you have no more authority over me than you have over the devil—me a scoundrel! my good fellow, I know who is the scoundrel."

"My good fellow! Damn my honor and blood, do you apply that to me?"

"No, I don't," said Sharpe, "for you're a cursed bad fellow, and no gentleman—didn't Harman pull your nose in Castle Cumber, and you wanted the courage then that you had for your ould grandmother—me, a scoundrel!"

"I'll tell you what, Sharpe; is this respect, sir, to your commanding officer? Sharpe, I'll mark you out for this."

"Don't you know," replied Sharpe, "that two of us can play at that game; you had better keep yourself quiet, if you're wise—a man that's in the habit of getting his nose pulled should be very inoffensive."

"Very well," said gallant Phil, "I'll say no more, *but*—." He then put spurs to handsome Harry, and rode off, full of vengeance against Sharpe, and of indignation at the contumelious reception he experienced at the hands of his grandfather.

Val's letter to M'Slime was, as our readers know, anything but an index to the state of regard in which he held that worthy gentleman. As we said, however, that ground was beginning to break a little under his feet, in spite of all his unction and Christian charity, we shall, while Darby is on his way to deliver his letter, take that opportunity of detailing a conversation between honest Solomon and Poll Doolin, upon one or two topics connected with our tale.

"Sam," said Solomon to his clerk, "you were not present with us at prayer this morning! You know we do not join in family worship until you come; and it is but our duty to take an interest in your spiritual welfare. In the meantime, I should regret, for your own sake, that anything in the shape of a falling away from your opportunities should appear in you. I speak now as your friend, Sam, not as your master—nay, rather as your brother, Sam—as a man who is not without his own lapses and infirmities, but who still trusts—though not by his own strength—that he may be looked upon, in some faint degree, as an example of what a man, wrestling with the cares and trials of life, ought at, least, to strive to be. To Him be the praise!"

"I certainly overslept myself this morning, sir—that is the truth."

"Yes, Sam; sloth is one of the disguises under which the enemy often assails and overcomes us. But to business, Sam. There is an old woman in Castle Cumber, whose name I scarcely remember. She goes dressed in faded black, and has a son, to whom, for wise purposes of course, it pleased Him to deny a full measure of ordinary sense?"

"Poll Doolin, sir, the old child-cadger, and her foolish son, Raymond of the hats."

"Don't say foolish, Sam; don't say foolish—we know not well what the true difference between wisdom and folly is, nor how much wisdom is manifested in the peculiar state of this person. We know not, indeed, whether what we blindly, perhaps, term folly, may not be a gift to be thankful for. You know the Word says, that the wisdom of man is foolishness before God. Our duty therefore is, to be thankful and humble."

"Well, sir; but about Poll Doolin, the child-cadger?"

"Child-cadger! that is a term I don't understand, Sam."

"Why, sir, it means a woman who carries——"

"Sam, hold; if it be associated with human frailty, it is best left unspoken. The woman, however, be she what she may—and I know not what she is—but that she is a responsible being—a partaker of our common nature, and is entitled to our sympathy. She is, I understand, in some difficulty, out of which, it seems, professional advice may help to take her. I expect her, therefore, about this time; and will you, Samuel, just stand at that window, and when you see her approach the house, do just quietly, and without noise, open the hall door. Something has occurred to discompose the Christian tone which usually prevails in our household; and poor Susanna is going. But, at all events, Sam, you are aware, it is said, that we ought not to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth."

"I know the text, sir, well; it ends with—'and he that giveth in secret, will reward thee openly.'"

"He—hem—ahem! yes it does so end; heigho! I feel, Sam, slightly depressed in spirit, as it were, and moved, as if somewhat of my usual support were withdrawn from me."

"Here she is, sir," said Sam.

"Very well, Sam; please to let her in as quietly as may be, and then take this declaration to the back office, and copy it as soon as you can—it is of importance. We should always endeavor to render services to our fellow creatures."

In the mean time, Sam very softly opened the hall door, and the next moment Poll entered.

Solomon, as usual, was certainly seated at his office, and held his features composed and serious to a degree; still, in spite of everything he could do, there was an expression half of embarrassment, and half of the very slightest perceptible tendency to a waggish smile, we can scarcely call it—but, whatever it might be, there it certainly was, betraying to Poll, in spite of all his efforts, that there was still the least tincture imaginable of human frailty associated with such a vast mass of sanctity.

Polly, when she entered, took a seat, and loosening the strings of her bonnet, raised it a little, and without uttering a word sat silently looking in M'Slime's face, with a very comic and significant expression on her own.

"No, Polly," said he, with a serious smile, "no, you are mistaken indeed—frail we all are, I grant you; but in this case I am acting for another. No, no, Polly—I trust those days of vanity are gone."

"Well, then, what else am I to do? I sent the reports abroad about M'Loughlin and Harman's being about to break; and of M'Loughlin I'll soon have my revenge, by the way—I and somebody else have the train laid for it."

"Polly, it was from no unchristian spirit of ill-will to them—for I trust that of such a spirit I am incapable—but to prevent them, by an unjust act, from injuring, perhaps from ruining others. That is my motive; but, at the same time, the whole matter is understood to be strictly confidential between you and me."

"Don't you know, Mr. M'Slime, that when there was an occasion for trustin' me, I didn't betray you to the world?"

"No—you did not; and it is for that reason that I trust you now."

"Ay, and you may, too; honor bright is my motive. You remember the day you passed Darby O'Drive and me, on our way to M'Clutchy's? Did I pretend to know you then?"

"You acted then, Poll, with great and commendable discretion, which you will please to remember I did not overlook."

"No," said Poll, "you behaved decently enough."

"But observe me now, Poll; if this report concerning the firm of M'Loughlin and Harman should by any possibility be traced to us, or rather to yourself, and that you should be pressed to disclose it, which, of course, you could not be; but if a weak moment should ever come—it is best then to speak the truth, and put the saddle as they rather profanely say, upon Valentine M'Clutchy, the right horse here."

"Upon M'Clutchy! why bad as he is, he never opened his lips to me on this subject."

"But he did to me, Poll, because it was from him I first heard the suggestion; so that in point of truth and justice, you are bound by your own conscience, or you ought at least—to lay it at his door—and that now you understand better"—he smiled a little

as he uttered these words—"But why don't you get a better bonnet, that one is very shabby?"

"It's aisier said than done," replied Poll, "the poor must always look poor, and will too."

"There then, are ten shillings, Poll; bestow them on that, or on any other purpose you prefer."

"Thank you, Mr. M'Slime, troth in the little job I did for you at our first acquaintance I found you—any way not worse than another. Well, but you can't desave me now—I see it in your eye—you have something else to say to me."

"Oh, nothing to signify. Merely a serious young person would wish to remove for change of air to some quiet nook until health—which, indeed, is the chiefest of temporal blessings, might be recovered."

"Man or woman?"

"A serious young woman, Poll."

"I see, I see, Mr. M'Slime; I know nothing more about it."

"Poll, listen—I shall no longer withhold confidence from you in this matter—unfortunately a member, indeed, I may say, two of our congregation have had a woeful fall. He ranks very high in it, and this is an act of the greater Christian friendship in me, inasmuch as in undertaking the management of this for him, I certainly run great risks of suffering in my own reputation. I cannot name him, for that would be a breach of confidence in me, but you are called upon to perform the duty required, and through me he shall compensate you for your trouble."

"Very well," replied Poll, "it must be done—and I can tell him whoever he is, that he could not come to any one that understands such matters betther."

"Good morning, Poll! Let me hear from you as soon as you can. Peace be with thee! but Poll, remember one thing, Harman and the M'Loughlins are going to America." Poll nodded significantly, but made no reply.

The moment she had gone, which she did by the aid of Solomon himself, who opened and closed the hall door after her, with a quietness of manner that seemed to communicate oil to the hinges themselves, he touched the bell, and in due time Susanna looked in.

"You rang, sir," said she.

"That arrangement is made;" said he, "so far all is well, or nearly so—go now." Susanna immediately withdrew, the few words he said seeming to have diffused sunshine into a face which appeared doubly serious.

When she was gone, Solomon laid his head down upon the desk before him, and remained in that position for some time. At length, without at all raising it, he began to play his knuckles against the lid, with a degree of alacrity which would not have disgraced the activity of a sleight-of-hand man. He at last rose, drew a long breath, and wore a very smiling face; but this was not all—O sanctity! O religion! Instead of going to his Bible, as one would imagine he ought to have done, instead of even taking up a psalm-book, and indulging in a spiritual song, he absolutely commenced whistling the Swaggering Jig, which he accompanied with as nimble a foot, and in as good time as if he had been a dancing-master all his life.

"Ah," said he, "I could have done it once, and would like to do it still, only for this wicked and censorious world." A knock from Darby O'Drive recalled him to a perception of his gifts, and when Darby entered he looked calm and serious as usual. Little could Darby have imagined, although perfectly aware of M'Slime's knavery, that the pious little man had just concluded "a short exercise," in performing the Swaggering Jig. As it was, however, he found him in a state which might either be termed a religious meditation, or an intense application to business—a Bible being on the one hand, and a brief on the other; but to which of the two he had devoted himself, neither Darby, nor indeed any one else, could guess. There, however, he sat, a kind of holy link between the law and the gospel.

When Darby entered, and delivered the letter, M'Slime on receiving it exclaimed, "Ah, from my excellent friend, M'Clutchy. Sit down, Darby, sit down, and whilst I am casting my eye over this note, do now, in order that we may make the most of our opportunities, do, I say, Darby, just read a chapter in this—" handing him over the Bible as he spoke. In the meantime he read as follows:—

"*Strictly confidential.*

"My Dear M'Slime:

"In order that the thing may be done as much in the shape and form of a matter of business as possible, don't you think it would be well for you, as Harman's lease has expired, to send me a regular written proposal for it—which proposal I may be able to show in justification of myself, should anything unfavorable turn up afterwards. Harman's offer was just double yours, but that is burnt; of course you will also burn this when you have read it. Your offer of assistance to M'Loughlin was well thought of; and even if we never, I mean you, should be paid, you are still a gainer by two hundred pounds. Each has offered a thousand a piece to have the leases renewed at the present rent; you give five hundred, very good, suppose you

lose three—that is, suppose M'Loughlin is *driven*, as, please God, he *shall be*, to allow you to accept a bill for three hundred—don't you see that you are still two hundred in pocket; no, I am wrong, not two but seven hundred. You can therefore well afford to lose three by the transaction, although, as I have said, it is not, in point of fact, losing three, but gaining seven, or at least five. Phil has also sent me a written proposal, which I will keep, but M'Loughlin's is gone the way of Harman's, as a matter of prudence. As for the private consideration between us, that is only to be glanced at. I give you my honor that Phil has tendered me two hundred, which I will not take, of course, either from you or him until the premises are cleared of the present tenants, This must be done very soon, and, I think it is much to be wished that Harman, who is a choleric scoundrel, should be put out of the way, if possible, If he is transported it will save us a good deal of annoyance. I should regret a meeting between him and Phil very much. Phil tells me that he once pulled his, Harman's, nose, and it is very natural that he should bear him a grudge for it. There is half a year's rent due this day, and the term mentioned in the notice to quit, expires next week. So far, then, all is right; we have them in our power, and can proceed safely. Parliament will, it is well ascertained, be certainly dissolved about the end of May next, so that we must work double tides to bring in his Lordship. There is a devilish spirit abroad, however, which will occasion us much trouble; but I cannot agree with you about renewing the leases, notwithstanding. It is just doing by those who are obstinate and ill-disposed, precisely as we ought; that is, holding a whip over their heads, and assuring them that we shall let it fall with rigor, unless they are agreeable as they ought. The Hon. Richard Topertoe is in London, but, between you and me, it matters little where he is; you may judge of what an intermeddling fool he must be, when he had the presumption to urge his Lordship to come to his native land, and live on his estate. This d——d Ribbonism and outrage, in spite of all our efforts, are still increasing; I think, however, that I shall be able to make a pounce some of these days. I have my spies at work, and let me tell you, that talk as they may, about its treachery and rascality, the spy system is an admirable one; in fact, it is like a two-edged sword, and cuts both ways, just as you wish. If, for instance, you cannot find Ribbonism made to your hand, you may make it—that is, you can corrupt first, and betray afterwards; which, at critical moments is unquestionably (I say this between ourselves) a decided advantage. By the by, my dear Solomon, the force of religion must be singularly strong and impressive in your life and conduct, when you have been able so wholesomely to influence that rascal bailiff of ours, Darby O'Drive. I have seldom, indeed, never witnessed so striking a change as you have produced in him; to tell you the truth, I felt a little chagrined and jealous about it; but as he owes us a kind of divided allegiance, I must rest contented.

"Believe me to be, my dear M'Slime,

"Yours affectionately and faithfully,

"VAL M'CLUTCHY, J.P."

To this, while Darby was tooth and nail at the Bible, Solomon wrote the following reply.

"MY DEAR M'CLUTCHY:

"I have just read your letter of this date, and agree with you in the necessity and propriety of my sending you a written proposal which you can show at a future time, in order to justify yourself should it be necessary so to do. I also need not say that your conduct in destroying the proposals of M'Loughlin and Harman was equally creditable to your head and heart. Prudence and discretion, my dear Val, are not virtues of every day occurrence, and as to giving the preference to a Christian friend, I do not see how a man as you are, with a strong sense of religion, could without injuring your conscience avoid it. What is it after all, my dear friend, but a spoiling of the Egyptians, as holy Moses did, when about to lead the children of Israel from bondage. In that case it was what may be termed in these our days a description of justifiable theft, such as many professors of the word do, in matters of business, feel themselves warranted even now in imitating. It requires, however, to be done carefully, and within the freedom of the perfect law; but, by no means, with a worldly or secular spirit, otherwise it will be deprived of that unction which renders the act a gracious exemplification of our Christian privileges, instead of a departure from rectitude, which it would be if committed by an ungodly person. These are distinctions, my dear friend, which I grant you is not permitted to many to make—only, indeed, I may humbly and fearfully say to such as have by long wrestling with the spirit been able to see truth, when the inward eye has been purged from the grossness of passion, for which to Him be praise and power. Amen!

"I herewith enclose you the proposal formally made, and will be ready to hand over the two hundred Christian manifestations of my gratitude at the proper season. As to

Lord Cumber being a loser by the transaction, such a loss must have been, we are bound to hope, shaped out for him as a punishment inflicted for gracious purposes. It is true he is ignorant of it, and I trust he shall remain so; but then we know that many a blessing comes to us in deep disguise, and that many a dispensation which we look upon as a favor from above, is far from being so. If, then, it be true that this thing is vouchsafed to him as a hidden blessing, let us be thankful that we have been selected as the unworthy means through whom he is made to receive it; or if it comes to him as a punishment, still it is our duty to reflect that we are merely the instruments through whose frailties, or virtues, as the case may be, he is visited, and that from the beginning this and many other acts which a blind unenlightened world might censure, were ordained for us, in order that the perfect scheme of Providence might be fulfilled.

"With respect to the spy system, I do agree with you fully. Many things must be done in secret, which the perversity of the world will not bear to hear of without committing sin. For instance, my dear Val, in sowing your crop of loyalty, so to speak, it might not, perhaps, be wrong—I am speaking, now observe, with reference to the cunning of the serpent, which you know we are enjoined to have, and if to have, of course to use when necessary; it might not, perhaps, be wrong I say, to cast a tare or two, if only for the purpose of employing our friends and fellow creatures to pull them out again. It is as it were, giving the idle employment, and enabling ourselves in the mean time to gather an abundant harvest into our own garners.

"With respect to Darby, I trust, that if my unworthy example and earnest precept have been successful in rescuing him from the bonds of error and sin—but what is still more dangerous, from the damnable thrall of Popery—it is not for me to vainly extol myself therefor. His conversion, however, will, I trust, be edifying to that interesting, but neglected class, the bailiffs of Ireland. With reference to them, I am engaged during the very few leisure hours that I can steal—so to speak—from my professional employment, in writing a second tract especially for their improvement. It will be appropriately called, *The Bailiff's Beacon or a Strengthener for tender Consciences:* By their friend and brother Christian, Solomon M'Slime, Attorney at Law.

"Verily, my lines have been made to fall in pleasant places. On yesterday, I had the satisfaction to be appointed *soul* agent to the Religious Cosmopolitan Assurance Association, being a branch of the Grand Junction Spiritual Railway Society for travellers to a better world. The salary is liberal, but the appointment—especially to a man of sincere principles—is full of care and responsibility. Allow me, my dear Val, to recommend you and your friends to purchase shares in the Spiritual Railway Society—it is under Him the safest of all associations yet established. The arrangements are admirably adapted for the objects in view. All the seats are delightfully soft, and as somnolent as church pews, to which they bear a close resemblance. The machine men, and all those appointed to situations on the line, are mostly in orders; but belong to different denominations. The scheme originated in Oxford, and has spread rapidly throughout the length and breadth of the land. Several of the stokers are bishops, and the reverend feeders discharge their respective duties with singular effect. It is hoped besides, that it may, under divine guidance, be the glorious means of bringing Popery within the influence of truth, whilst its enemies—for it has enemies—as who has not—its enemies assert that whether it shall take in Popery, or Popery take in it, is a matter very difficult to be determined.

"They are also exceedingly expert at tract writing, which they perform, if I may say so, without boasting or vanity, very much in my own spirit. Poor Susanna is ailing—I mean a serious young person in our family who tended our little olive branches and understood my habits. She is leaving us, and I shall miss her, for I am one of those persons, my dear friend, who have a heart for—and I trust I may say, that can sympathize with—my fellow creatures, however humble. Do you remember that I once availed myself of a Christian privilege, to mention between us the subject of family prayer?

"I remain, my dear M'Clutchy, with, may I hope, a few of the graces of my calling—an earnest wrestler against sin,

"SOLOMON M'SLIME."

"Now, Darby," said he, having folded the letter enclosing his tender for Harman's farm, and handed it to him, "now, that so much is despatched, I trust we may have a word or two upon a subject of still higher importance. How do you feel in a spiritual way?—Are your views as clear as ever?—are you supported—I mean inwardly, for that is the only true support after all?"

"Thrath, Mr. M'Slime, I'm afeard to spake, sir, for fraid I'd say either more or less than the truth."

"That is a good sign, Darby, but you must avoid profane swearing, which is a

habit you contracted when in the bonds of iniquity; but you must reform it—or rather, grace will be given you to reform it."

"I hope so," replied Darby, "and that I'll still get a clearer knowledge of the truth, plaise Goodness."

Darby, as he uttered these words, would have given a trifle to have had M'Clutchy to look at. Little did Solomon suspect the truth to which his convert alluded.

"May it in charity be granted!" exclaimed Solomon, slightly twitching up his eyebrows. "But, Darby, will you be properly prepared on next Sabbath (D. V.) to bear strong testimony against error and idolatry?"

"Why, I'll do my best, sir," replied Darby, "and you know the best can do no more."

"Well, but you can faithfully say that you are utterly free from every taint of Popery."

"Faith, sir, I don't know that that would be altogether prudent. Did you never hear of the ould proverb, sir—not to throw out the dirty water till you get in the clane—I'm not sure that I have a sufficient grip of the new light yet," said Darby, falling unconsciously into his usual style of conversation, "but, I hope that by next Sunday, I'll be able to shine—an', be me sowl, if I don't, sir, it'll be none o' my fawt—divil resave the purtier convert in Europe than I'll make when I come to know a little about it."

"Darby," said Solomon, impatiently, "this is really very trying to one so anxious for your spiritual welfare as I am. This awful swearing—I really fear that some of your light has been withdrawn since our last interview."

"Not at all unlikely," replied Darby; "but wid great submission, don't you think, sir, that two religions is betther than one?"

"How do you mean by adverting to such an impossibility?"

"Why, sir, suppose I kept the ould one, and joined this new reformation to it, wouldn't I have two chances instead o' one?"

"Darby," said Solomon, "avoid, or rather pray that you may be enabled to avoid the enemy; for I fear he is leading you into a darker error. I tell you—I say unto you—that you would be much better to have no religion than the Popish. You have reminded me of one proverb, suffer me to remind you of another; do you not know, to speak in a worldly figure, that an empty house is better than a bad tenant? why, I looked on you with pride, with a kind of holy joy, as one whom I had wrestled for, and won from the enemy; but I fear you are relapsing."

"I hope in God, sir," replied Darby, very gravely, "that you and he won't have to toss up for me; for I feel myself sometimes one thing, and sometimes the other."

"Ah!" replied Solomon, "I fear I must give you up, and in that case it will not be in my power to employ you in a very confidential matter, the management of which I imagined I could have entrusted to you. That, however, cannot be now, as no one not amply provided with strong religious dispositions, could be relied on in it."

Darby, who, in fact, was playing M'Slime precisely as a skilful fisherman does his fish; who, in order to induce him the more eagerly to swallow the bait, pretends to withdraw it from his jaws, by which means it is certain to be gulped down, and the fish caught.

"Ah, sir," replied Darby, "I'm greatly afeared that every person like me must struggle with great temptations."

"That is an excellent observation," said Solomon; "and I do suppose, that since this desirable change took place in your heart, you must have been woefully beset."

"Never suffered so much in my life," replied the other. "Now there's your two beautiful tracts, and may I never die in sin ——I hope, sir, there's no great harm in that oath?"

"No great harm; but you had better omit it, however—it smacks of sin and superstition."

"Well, sir—may I never—I beg pardon—but any how, the truth is, that ever since I tuck to readin' them, I feel myself gettin' as dishonest as if the devil—"

"Do not name him so, Darby—it is profane; say the enemy, or Satan, or the tempter."

"As if the whole three o' them, then, war at my elbow. Why, for the last three or four days, I may say, they have cleared me out as clane of honesty as the black boy himself, and it is worse I am gettin'. Now, sir, it stands to sense, that that's temptation."

"Unquestionably; and my great hope and consolation is, that you yourself are conscious of it. All you have to do now, is to pray unceasingly—wrestle in prayer, and you will ultimately triumph. Sing spiritual songs, too; read my tracts with attention; and, in short, if you resist the dev—hem—Satan, they will flee from you. Give that letter to Mr. M'Clutchy, and let me see you on the day after to-morrow—like a giant refreshed with new strength."

"Well, now," said Darby, assuming a more serious look—"do you know, sir, that I think your words have put new strength into me. Somehow I feel as if there was a load removed from me. May the mother of heaven—hem—I do, sir; and now, as a proof of it, I

wouldn't feel justified, sir, in leaving you, widout sayin' a word or two about the same M'Clutchy, who, between you and me—but I hope it won't go farther, sir?"

"I don't think it would be permitted to me to betray confidence—I humbly think so. Be not afraid, but speak."

"Why, sir, he has got a dirty trick of speakin' disrespectfully of you behind your back."

"Human weakness, Darby! poor profligate man! Proceed, what does he say?"

"Why, sir, if it 'ud be agreeable to you, I'd rather not be goin' over it."

"We should know our friends from our enemies, O'Drive; but I forgive him, and shall earnestly pray for him this night. What did he say?"

"Why he said, sir — verily, thin, I'm ashamed to say it."

"Did he speak only of myself?" inquired Solomon, with something like a slight, but repressed appearance of alarm.

"Oh, of nobody else, sir. Well, then, he said, sir—but sure I'm only repatin' his wicked words—he said, sir, that if you were cut up into the size of snipe shot, there would be as much roguery in the least grain of you, as would corrupt a nation of pickpockets."

"Poor man! I forgive him. Do you not see me smile, Darby?"

"I do, indeed, sir."

"Well, that is a smile of forgiveness—of pure Christian forgiveness—free from the slightest taint of human infirmity. I am given to feel this delightful state of mind at the present moment—may He be praised!—proceed."

"It is a blessed state, sir, and as you can bear it—and as I can trust you, what I could not him—I will go on:—he said, besides, sir, that your example had made the ould boy himself a worse boy now than he had ever been before he ever knew you!—that in temptin' you, he got new dodges of wickedness that he was never up to till he met you, and that he's now receivin' lessons from you in the shape of a convartin' parson."

"Ah! well!—I see, I see—that is an unchristian allusion to my recent intercourse with the Rev. Phineas Lucre, the respected and highly connected rector of Castle Cumber, and his nephew, the Rev. Boanerges Frothwell, both of whom take a deep interest in the New Reformation movement which is now so graciously advancing. However, I shall pray for that man this night."

"Sir, I feel much relieved; I'm a changed man widin these few minutes, I may say—but what, afther all, is aquil to a good example? I feel, sir, as if a strong hatred of idolaphry was comin' an me."

"Idolatry, you mean, Darby?"

"Yes, sir, that's what I mean."

"Where is that letter of Mr. M'Clutchy's—oh, I have it. Well, Darby," said M'Slime, quietly changing it for another, "here it is; now, do you see how I commit that letter to the flames?" placing M'Clutchy's under the side of a brief; "and even as the flames die away before your eyes, so dies away—not my resentment, Darby, for none do I entertain against him—but the memory of his offensive expressions."

"Sir," said Darby, "this is wonderful! I often heard of religion and forgiveness of injuries, but antil this day I never saw them in their thrue colors. The day after to-morrow I'm to call, sir?"

"The day after to-morrow."

"Well, sir, may the Holy Virgin this day—och, indeed I do not know what I'm sayin' sir—Religion! well if that's not religion what is or can be? Good mornin' sir."

"Good morning, Darby, and remember my advice—pray, sing, wrestle—peace be with you!"

CHAPTER XI.

Darby and Solomon at Prayer—An Instance of Pure Charity—Candidates for Conversion—An Appropriate Confidence—The Rev. Phineas Lucre and his Curate, Mr. Clement—Rev. Father Roche and his Curate, Father M'Cabe.

Darby was opening the hall-door, when, as if struck by a new train of thought, he again tapped at the office door, and begged pardon for entering.

"I'm in a sweet state, sir," said he; "and would you forgive me, now that my heart is full, by lookin' at such an example, if I tuck the liberty of axin' you to kneel down and offer a Pather an' Ave an'—hem—och, what am I sayin'—an' offer up a wurd in saison for that unfortunate blaggard, M'Clutchy—any how, it'll improve myself, and I feel as if there was new strength put into me. Oh, the netarnal scoundrel! To spake the way he did of sich a man—sich a scantlin of grace—of—oh, then, do, sir; let us offer up one prayer for him, the vagabond!"

The reader will perceive, however, by and by, that Darby's sudden and enthusiastic principle of charity towards M'Clutchy, wanted that very simple requisite, sincerity—a commodity, by the way, in which the worthy bailiff never much dealt. Indeed we may say here, that the object of his return was connected with anything but religion.

A shade of feeling, somewhat rueful, sat on M'Slime's features, until he caught Dar-

by's eye fixed upon him, when, after rebuking him for the terms in which he proposed the prayer, he knelt down, and with a most serene smile, commenced an earnest supplication, which became still more vehement—then louder—bewailed his lost state—deplored his keeping aloof from the means of grace—"feared that the example of his old, and sinful, and blasphemous father, and his most profligate mother, had rendered his heart impenetrable to all visitations of conscience or religion—if conscience he ever had, or religion he ever heard; both of which, he, the humble and sinful suppliant, doubted. What then was his state? Oh! how could a charitable or truly religious heart bear to think of it without being deeply affected"—handkerchief here applied to the eyes, and some sobs—a nondescript sound from Darby, accompanied by a most pathetic shaking of the sides—evidently as much affected as M'Slime.—The prayer was then wound up in a long, heavy, dolorous cadence, which evidently proceeded from a strong conviction that he who prayed was laboring against all hope and expectation that the humble "mean" then adopted would be attended by any gracious result—the voice consequently quavered off into a most dismal sound, which seemed, as it were, to echo back a doleful answer to their solicitations, and accordingly Solomon rose up with a groan that could not be misunderstood.

"You see, O'Drive," said he, "we have received no answer—or rather a bad one—I fear his is a hopeless case, as, indeed, that of every reprobate and castaway is; and this distresses me."

"Mr. M'Slime," said Darby, "will you excuse me, sir—but the thruth is, I never properly knew you before." These words he uttered in a low confidential voice, precisely such as we might suppose a man to speak in, who, under his circumstances, had got new convictions. "I'll appear next Sabbath, and what is better, I think in a few days I'll be able to bring three or four more along wid me."

"Do you think so?" said M'Slime, a good deal elated at the thought; for the attorney was only playing his game, which certainly was not the case with the greater number of the new reformation men, who were as sincere in their motives as he was hypocritical in his exertions. "And what are their names, Darby?"

"I feel, sir," replied O'Drive, "that it's my duty as a Christian, brought out of the land of cordage—"

"Bondage, Darby."

"Of bondage, to do all I can for the spread o' the gospel. Their names," responded Darby, rubbing his elbow with a perplexed face; "don't you think, sir, it 'ud be betther to wait awhile, till we'd see what could be done with them privately?"

"No, Darby, give me their names and residences, and I will see, that however hard the times are, they shall not at least be starved for want of—truth."

"Well, then," said Darby, "first, there is Paudeen Rafferty, of Dernascobe; Paudeen, sir, is, at the present spaking, badly given to drink, and he swears, and fights mortially, too, the hathen; but, then, he's in darkness, sir, yet; and you know that the greater the sinner the greater the saint. If Paudeen was dacently convarted he'd make a mighty fine Christian no doubt. To be sure he has two wives, along wid his love for liquor and fightin'; but wouldn't it be a good plan to bring them over, too, sir; the poor lost cratures, sunk, as they are, in hathenism and vociferation?"

"Very good, I have him down, Darby; we must struggle, however, to win him over, and to induce him to give up his guilty connections. Are they young, Darby!"

"Two of the best looking young women in the parish."

"We must only see, then, if they can be rescued also; for that is a duty—a pressing duty, certainly."

"But I'm afeard, sir, it 'ud take a ship load o' Scripture to convart the three o' them."

"We shall try, however; nothing is to be despaired of under such circumstances, unless I am afraid the regeneration of that unhappy man M'Clutchy—(eyes turned up). Who next?"

"Why, you may set down Harry M'Murt, of Drinnska. Harry's an unsettled kind of fellow, or as they call him a Rake. It would be an active charity to convert him—and that *could* convert him for he has as many twists in him as an eel—if it was only for the sake of gettin' him to spake the truth."

"Who else, Darby?"

"Put down Charley Casey, sir; and if you take my advice, you'll set in at the convarsion of him while his famine lasts—otherwise, he's a bitter idolapher as ever welted an Orangeman; but against that, he has the stomach o' three men—and the best time to come at him wid the gospel is the present. Bait it wid a flitch of bacon on the one side, and a collop o' fresh meat on the other, now before the praties comes in, and you're sure of him."

"Any others, Darby?—but, indeed, as far as we have gone yet, the cases appear to me to be difficult ones. However, there is joy in heaven, Darby, over one sinner—and surely the greater the sin the greater the joy and the triumph. Any others?"

"Mark down Molly Crudden, sir—she would be a glorious catch if a word in saison could fasten on her. She goes by the name of Funny Eye. The poor woman is mother to a large family of childre, sir; and the worst of it is, that no two o' them goes by the same name. It would be a proud day that we could make sure of her, especially as Father Roche and Mr. M'Cabe, his curate, were obliged to give her up, and forbid her the parish; but Funny Eye only winks and laughs at them and the world. She's the last, sir—but I'll be on the look out, God willin', for a few more desperate cases to crown our victory over the dev—ahem! over Satan and the priests."

"Well, then, let me see you, as I said, the day after to-morrow, and in the mean time—peace, and joy, and victory be with you!"

"The same to you, sir, and many of them! Amin—I pray the sweet queen o' heaven this day!"

"Darby," said M'Slime, who looked upon his mingling up religious expressions peculiar to his class as a proof of his sincerity—"Darby," said he in a low, condensed, and collected voice—"I said I had the execution of a commission to entrust to you."

"But, sir," said Darby, whose ears, could they have shaped themselves according to his wishes, would have ran into points in order to hear with more acuteness—"Sir," said he, "I doubt I'm not worthy of such a trust."

"Perfectly worthy, Darby," continued Solomon, "if I did not think so I would not employ you—I have engaged another person to prepare, as it were, the way for you; but the truth is, it would never do to allow that person and the young person of whom you are going to take charge to be seen together. Evil constructions would most assuredly be put on innocent actions, Darby, as they often are; and for this reason it is that I have partly changed my mind, and will entrust one-half the commission I speak of to you." As if, however, he feared that the very walls might justify the old proverb by proving that they had ears, he stood up and whispered a short, but apparently most interesting communication to Darby, who appeared to listen to a tale that was calculated rather to excite admiration than any other feeling. And we have little doubt, indeed, that the tale in question was given as illustrating the exertion of as pure an instance of Christian compassion and benevolence as ever was manifested in the secret depths of that true piety which shuns the light; for Darby's journey was most assuredly to be made in the dark and still hours of the night. On opening the door a party of three or four clients were about to knock, but having given them admission he went away at rather a brisk, if not a hasty pace.

Darby having concluded this interview was proceeding, not exactly in the direction of M'Clutchy's, but as the reader shall soon hear, to a very different person, no other than the Rev. Phineas Lucre, D.D., Rector of the Parish of Castle Cumber; a living at that time worth about eighteen hundred a year.

The Rev. Phineas Lucre, then, was a portly gentleman, having a proud, consequential air stamped upon his broad brow and purple features. His wife was niece to a nobleman, through whose influence he had been promoted over the head of a learned and pious curate, whose junior Mr. Lucre had been in the ministry only about the short period of twenty-five years. Many persons said that the curate had been badly treated in this transaction, but those persons must have known that he had no friends except the poor and afflicted of his parish, whose recommendation of him to his bishop, or the minister of the day, would have had little weight. His domestic family, too, was large, a circumstance rather to his disadvantage; but he himself was of studious, simple, and inexpensive habits. As for dinners he gave none, except a few fragments of his family's scanty meal to some hungry, perhaps, deserted children, or to a sick laborer when abandoned by his landlord or employer, the moment he became unable to work. From the gentry of the neighborhood he got no invitations, because he would neither sing—dance—drink—nor countenance the profligacies of their sons—nor flatter the pride and vanity of their wives and daughters. For these reasons, and because he dared to preach home truths from his pulpit, he and his unpretending children had been frequently made objects of their ridicule and insolence. What right, then, had any one to assert that the Rev. Mr. Clement had received injustice by the promotion over his head of the Rev. Phineas Lucre, to the wealthy living of Castle Cumber, when he had no plausible or just grounds beyond those to which we have adverted, on which to rest his claim for preferment? The curate was pious, we admit, but, then, his wife's uncle was not a lord. He was learned, but, then, he had neither power nor the inclination to repay his patrons—supposing him to have such, by a genius for intrigue, or the possession of political influence. He discharged his religious duties as well as the health of a frame worn by affliction, toil, and poverty, permitted him; but, then, he wrote no pamphlets adapted to the politics by which

he might rise in the church. He visited the sick and prayed with them; but he employed not his abilities in proving to the world that the Establishment rewarded piety and learning, rather than venal talents for state intrigue or family influence.

Far different from him was his aforenamed rector, the Rev. Phineas Lucre. Though immeasurably inferior to his curate in learning, and all the requisite qualifications for a minister of God, yet was he sufficiently well read in the theology of his day, to keep up a splendid equipage. Without piety to God, or charity to man, he possessed, however, fervent attachment to his church, and unconquerable devotion to his party. If he neglected the widow and the orphan whom he could serve, he did not neglect the great and honorable, who could serve himself. He was inaccessible to the poor, 'tis true; but on the other hand, what man exhibited such polished courtesy, and urbanity of manner, to the rich and exalted. Inferiors complained that he was haughty and insolent; yet it was well known, in the teeth of all this, that no man ever gave more signal proofs of humility and obedience to those who held patronage over him. It mattered little, therefore, that he had no virtues for the sick, or poverty-stricken, in private life, when he possessed so many excellent ones for those in whose eyes it was worth while to be virtuous as a public man.

Mr. Lucre, possessing high political connection, and withal affecting to be very religious, presented singular points of character for observation. He was a great diciplinarian in theory, and rendered it imperative on his poor overworn curate to be so in practice; but being always engaged in the pursuit of some ecclesiastical windfall, he consequently spent most of his time, and of his money, either in our own metropolis or London—but principally in the latter. He did not, however, leave either his discipline or his devotion as a public man behind him. In Dublin, he was practical in worshipping the Lord Lieutenant—and in London, the King; whilst his curate was only worshipping God in the country. The result of his better sense and more seasonable piety soon became evident, on his part, in the shape of an appointment to a second living; and that of his curate, in obscurity, poverty, and that useless gift, a good conscience.

We have said that Mr. Lucre was not pious; yet we are far from saying that he had not all the credit of piety. His name, in fact, was always conspicuous among the most bountiful contributors to the religious societies. Indeed he looked upon most of them as excellent auxiliaries to the cold and scanty labors of those wordly-minded or indolent pastors, who think, when they have furnished every family in the parish with a Bible and a sheaf of tracts, that they have done their duty. Mr. Lucre, consequently, bore an excellent character everywhere but among the poor, sick, and indigent of his two large parishes; and if a eulogium had been called for on him, he would have received an admirable one from the societies to whose funds he contributed, from the gentry of his respective parishes, and from the grand juries of the two counties in which they were situated.

What more than this could be expected? Here was ample testimony for those who required it, to establish the zeal, efficiency, talents, integrity, charity and piety of that worthy and useful minister of God—the Rev. Phineas Lucre, D.D.

Such were a few of the virtues which belonged to this gentleman. His claims for preferment were, indeed, peculiarly strong; and when we mention the political influence of himself and his friends, his wife's powerful connections, added to his able pamphlets, and the great mass of sound information regarding the state of the country, which in the discharge of his *religious* duties, he communicated from time to time to the government of the day—we think we have said enough to satisfy our readers that he ought not to be overlooked in the wealthy and pious Establishment, which the Irish Church then was. Still, in fact, we cannot stop here, for in good truth Mr. Lucre had yet stronger claims for preferment than any we have yet mentioned. *He did not stand in need of it.* In addition to a large dowry received with his wife, he possessed a private fortune of fourteen hundred pounds per annum, with which, joined to his two large livings, he was enabled to turn out a very primitive and apostolic equipage, such as would have made the hearts of the Apostles rejoice in reflecting, that so many new virtues were to spring up in the progress of society from the lowly religion they established.

Such is a pretty full sketch of a large class which existed at a former period in the Established Church of Ireland. Mr. Lucre was, besides, what may be termed one of the first fruits of that which is called modern sanctity or saintship, being about two-thirds of the Tory and High Churchman, and one of the Evangelical.

In the same parish of Castle Cumber resided two other clergyman of a different creed and character; the Rev. James Roche, the venerable parish priest, was one of those admirable pastors whose lives are the most touching and beautiful exponent of the

Christian faith. In this amiable man were combined all these primitive virtues which are so suitable, and, we may add, necessary, to those who are called upon to mingle with the cares and affections, joys and sufferings, of an humble people. Without pride, beyond the serene simplicity which belonged to his office, he yet possessed the power of engaging the affections and respect of all who knew him, whether high or low. With the poor, and those entrusted to his spiritual charge, were all his sympathies, both as a man and a pastor. His, indeed, was no idle charge, nor idly, nor with coldness or pride, were its duties entered upon or performed. His little purse and small means were less his own than the property of the poor around him; his eye was vigilant of want and of sorrow, of crime and frailty—and wherever the painful rebuke, the humble and the consoling word was necessary, there stood he to administer it. Such was Father Roche, as the pastor of a large but poor flock, who had few sympathies to expect, save those which this venerable man was able to afford them.

Very different from him, on the other hand, was his curate, the Rev. Patrick M'Cabe, or M'Flail, as he was nicknamed by the Orangemen of the parish, in consequence of a very unsacerdotal tendency to use the horsewhip, as a *last* resource, especially in cases where reason and the influence of argument failed. He was a powerful young man, in point of physical strength, but as his temperment was hot and choleric, the consciousness of this strength often led him, under its impulse, in desperate cases, to a mode of reasoning, which, after all, no man more than himself subsequently regretted. Zealous he unquestionably was, but beyond the bounds prescribed by a spirit of Christian moderation. I know not how it happened, but the Orangeman hated him with an intensity of detestation, which, however, he paid back to them tenfold. His vast strength, which had been much improved by a strong relish for athletic exercises, at which he was unrivaled, when joined to a naturally courageous and combative temperament, often prompted him to manifest, in cases of self-defence, the possession of powers which they feared to call into exercise. This disposition, however, which, after all, was not so unnatural, he properly restrained and kept in subjection; but, in order to compensate for it, he certainly did pepper them, in his polemical discourses, with a vehemence of abuse, which, unquestionably, they deserved at his hands—and got. With the exception of too much zeal in religious matters, his conduct was, in every other respect, correct and proper.

To return now to Darby, whose steps have been directed, not exactly towards Constitution Cottage, but towards the spacious glebe-house of the Rev. Phineas Lucre, which brought him about a mile or two out of his way. The fact is he was beginning to tire of M'Slime, who, whenever he had occasion for his services, was certain to shear him of his fees on the one hand precisely as M'Clutchy did on the other. The change of agents was consequently of no advantage to him, as he had expected it would be; for such was the rapacity of the two harpies that each of them took as much as they could out of the unfortunate tenants, and left Darby little to comfort himself, with the exception of what he got by their virtuous example, an example which he was exceedingly apt to follow, if not to exceed. For this reason he detested them both, and consequently felt a natural anxiety to set them together by the ears whenever he thought the proper occasion for it should arrive. Now, an event had taken place the very day before this, which opened up to his mind a new plan of operations altogether. This was the death of the under gaoler of Castle Cumber. Darby began to think of this as a good speculation, should it succeed; but alas! upon second reflection there stood an insurmountable difficulty in his way. He was a Roman Catholic so far as he was anything; and this being a situation of too much trust and confidence at the period to be given to any one of that persuasion, he knew he he could not obtain it. Well, but here again he was fortunate, and not without the prospect of some consolation. The extraordinary movement in the religious world, called the New Reformation, had just then set in with a liveliness of judgment, and a celerity of conversion among the lower classes of Roman Catholics, which scarcely anybody could understand. The saints, however, or evangelical party, headed by an animable, benevolent, but somewhat credulous nobleman, on whose property the movement first commenced, ascribed this extraordinary conversion altogether to themselves.

The season to be sure in which it occurred was one of unprecedented destitution and famine. Fuel was both scarce and bad—the preceding crops had failed, and food was not only of a deleterious quality, but scarcely to be procured at all. The winter, too, was wet and stormy, and the deluges of rain daily and incessant. In fact, cold, and nakedness, and hunger met together in almost every house and every cabin, with the exception of those of the farmers alone, who, by the way, mostly held land upon a very small scale. In this district, then, and in such a period of calamity, and misery, and utter famine, did the

movement called the New Reformation originate.

"Sure, blood alive," thought Darby, "now that every one's turnin', there's no harm to have a thrial at it myself; I can become as good a Prodestan as most o' them in four and twenty hours, and stand a chance of the Jaolership for my pains. I'll go to Mr. Lucre, who is a gentleman at any rate, and allow him to think he has the convartin' o' me. Well," he proceeded, with a chuckle, "it's one comfort, divil a much religion I have to lose; and another, that the divil a much I have to gain in exchange; and now," he went on, "there's little Solomon thinks I did'nt see him burnin' the wrong letther; but faith, Solomon, my lad, there must be something in it that would do neither you nor M'Clutchy much good, if it was known, or you wouldn't thry that trick—but, in the mean time, I've secured them both."

Now, the reader must know, that Darby's return in such a truly charitable spirit to ask Solomon for the virtue of his prayers in behalf of M'Clutchy, was as knavish a *ruse* as ever was put in practice. Solomon had placed M'Clutchy's letter secretly under a brief, as we have said, and Darby, who knew the identical spot and position in which M'Slime was in the habit of praying, knew also that he would kneel with his back to the desk on which the brief lay. It all happened precisely as he wished, and, accordingly, while Solomon was doing the hypocrite, Darby did the thief, and having let in those who were approaching, he came away, as we said.

He lost not a moment after he had got to a lonely part of the road, in putting them between two flat stones—we mean M'Clutchy's letter to Solomon, with that gentleman's answer. There, he determined, they should remain until after dark, when he could secure both without risk, and see what might be done with them.

"Now," thought he, "that I've Solomon in a double pickle—for he can't inquire about the letter without letting it be seen that he tould a lie, and practised a bit of knavery, any how—an' as regardin' the other thing, I have him fast."

In the meantime, Father M'Cabe, who had read M'Slime's paragraph in the Castle Cumber "True Blue," respecting Darby's conversion, had a sharp eye out for him, as they term it in the country. Indeed, after two or three vain attempts to see him, the Rev. gentleman was satisfied with sending him a gentle message of congratulation upon his change of creed, which was significantly wound up by a slight hint, that he might, probably, on their next meeting, give him a nice treat, but of what particular description was not communicated. Darby having secured the letters as described, was proceeding at a pretty quick pace towards Mr. Lucre's, when, whom should he meet in a narrow part of the way, which was enclosed between two immense white thorn hedges, through which any notion of escape was impracticable—but the Rev. Father M'Cabe. He tried every shift—looked back as if he expected some friend to follow him—then to the right—again to the left—then stooped to examine the ground, as if he had lost something of value or importance. At length, finding every other trick useless, he adopted that one so common among boys in desperate cases—we mean the attempt to make a mask of the right shoulder in order to conceal the face. Even this failed, and he found himself compelled to meet the fixed and stern gaze of the colossal priest, who was on horseback, and bore in his huge right hand a whip, that might, so gripped, have tamed a buffalo, or the centaur himself, if he were not fabulous.

"Why—my good, honest and most religious friend, Mr. Darby O'Drive—the odor of whose sanctity, you scoundrel, has already perfumed the whole Parish—is it possible that Providence in kindness to me, and in pure justice to yourself, has thrown you into my way at last." This for the present was accompanied only by a peculiar quivering motion of the whip, resulting from the quick vibrations which his sense of Darby's hypocrisy had communicated through the hand to the weapon which it held.

"God save your Reverence!" replied Darby, "an' in troth I'm glad to see you look so well—faith it's in a glow o' health you are, may God continue it to you! Be my sowl, it's you that can pepper the Orangemen, any how, your Reverence—and how is Father Roche, sir—although sure enough he's no match for you in givin' it home to the thieves."

"Silence, you hypocritical sleeveen, don't think you'll crawl up my wrist—as you do up M'Clutchy's and M'Slime's. Is it true that you have become an apostate?"

Darby here attempted to work up a kind of sly significant wheedling expression into his eye, as he stole a half timid, half confidant glance at the priest—but it would not do—the effort was a failure, and no wonder—for there before him sat the terrible catechist like an embodied thunder cloud—red, lurid, and ready to explode before him—nay he could see the very lightning playing and scintillating in his eyes, just as it often does about the cloud before the bursting of the peal. In this instance there was neither

sympathy nor community of feeling between them, and Darby found that no meditated exposition of pious fraud, such as "quartering on the enemy," or "doing the thieves," or any other interested *ruse*, had the slightest chance of being tolerated by the uncompromising curate. The consequence was, that the rising roguery died away from Darby's face, on which there remained nothing but a blank and baffled expression, that gave strong assurance of his being in a situation of great perplexity. The most timid and cowardly animals will, however, sometimes turn upon their captors, and Darby although he felt no disposition to bandy words with the curate, resolved, notwithstanding, to abide by the new creed, until he should be able to ascertain his chance of the gaolership. There was, besides, another motive. He knew Mr. Lucre's character so well, that he determined to pursue such a course, during his interview, as might ensure him a sound horse-whipping; for it occurred to him that a bit of martyrdom would make a capital opening argument during his first interview with Mr. Lucre.

"Did you hear me, sir?" again inquired the curate, making his whip whistle past his own right foot, just as if he had aimed it at the stirrup—"is it true that you have turned apostate?"

"I thought you knew it, sir," said Darby, "or if you didn't, why did you read me out the Sunday before last from the althar?"

"Then you acknowledge it," cried the priest, "you have the brass to acknowledge it, have you?" And here the whip made a most ferocious sweep in the air.

"Yes," replied Darby, thinking by the admission to increase the impending castigation—"yes, sir; I don't belong to *your flock* now—you have no authority whatsomever over me—mind that."

"Haven't I indeed, Mr. Convert—oh, what a sweet convert you are—but we'll see whether I have or not, by and by. Where are you bound for now? To taste of Mr. Lucre's flesh pots? eh?"

"I'm bound for Mr. Lucre's, sure enough; and I hope there's no great harm in that."

"Oh, none in the world, my worthy neophyte, none. Mr. Lucre's argument and Lord ——'s bacon are very powerful during this hard season. Those that haven't a stitch to their backs are clothed—those that haven't a morsel to eat are fed—and if they haven't a fire, they get plenty of fuel to burn their apostate skins at; and because this heretical crew avail themselves of the destitution of these wretches—and lure them from their own faith by a blanket and a flitch of bacon, they call that conversion—the new Reformation by the way, ha—ha—ha—oh, it's too good!"

"And do you think, sir," said Darby, "that if they had a hard or an enlightened hoult of their own creed, that that would do it?"

The whip here described a circle, one part of whose circumference sang within a few inches of Darby's ear—who, forgetting his relish for martyrdom, drew back his head to avoid it.

"None of your back jaw," said M'Cabe; "don't you know, sirra, that in spite of this Methodist Lord and the proud parson's temptations, you are commanded to renounce the devil, the world, and *the flesh?* Don't you know that?"

"But," replied Darby, "are we commanded to renounce the devil, the world, and a bit o' fresh mait?"

"Ha—you snivelling scoundrel," said the curate, "you've got their arguments already I see—but I know how to take them out of you, before you leave my hands."

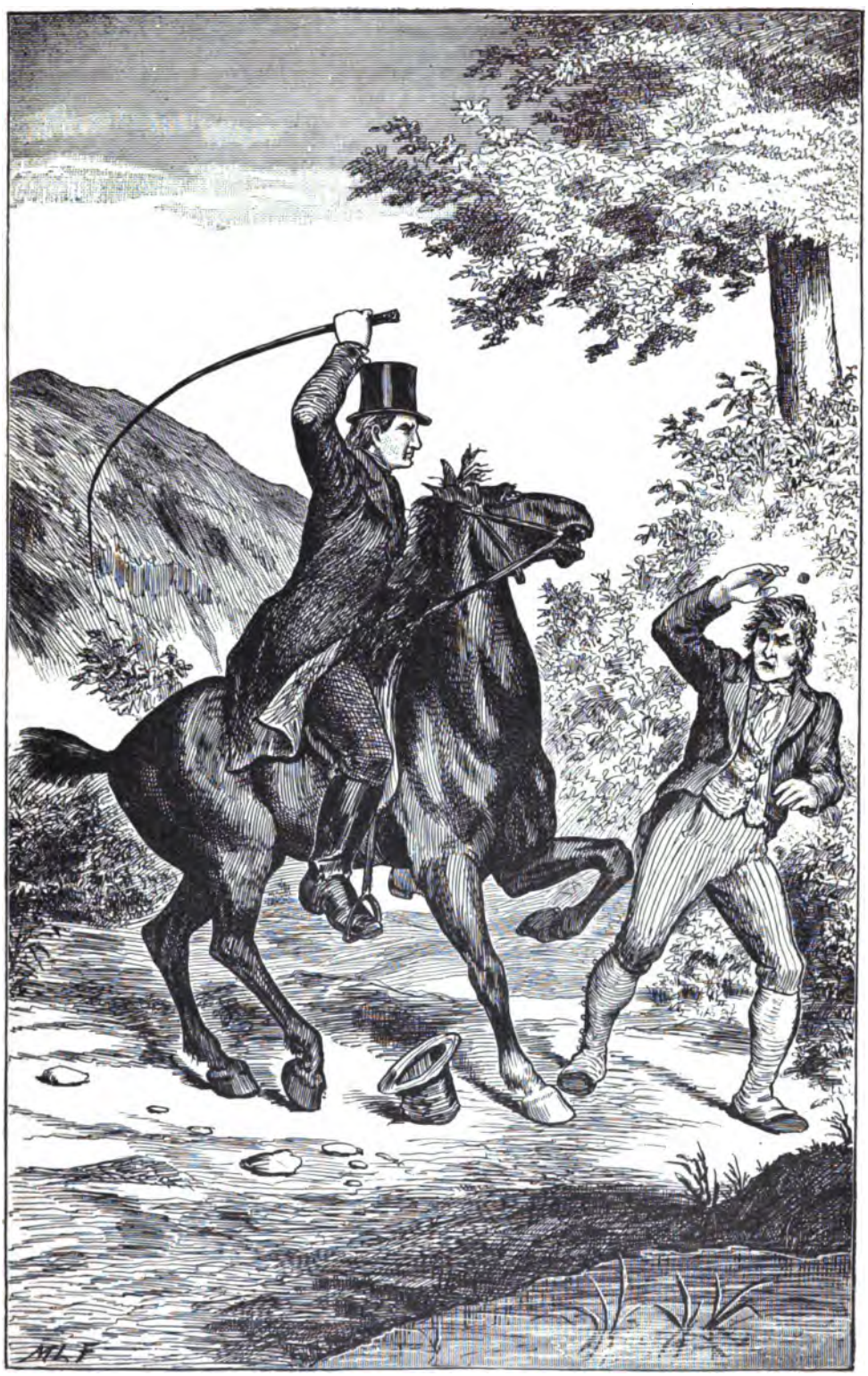
"Surely," continued Darby, "you wouldn't have a naked man renounce a warm pair o' breeches, or a good coat to his back—does the Scriptur forbid him that?"

"You *will* have it," replied the curate, who felt for the moment astounded at Darby's audacity, "you are determined on it; but I will have patience with you yet, a little, till I see what brought you over, if I can. Don't you admit, as I said, that you are commanded to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh—particularly the flesh, sirra, for there's a peculiar stress laid upon that in the Greek."

"Well, but does it go in the Greek against a flitch o' bacon and a wisp o' greens, your reverence? Faith, beggin' your pardon, if you were to see some o' the new convarts, how comfortable they are wid their good frieze coats, and their new warm blankets, sittin' beside their good fires, you'd maybe not blame them so much as you do. *Your* religion, sir, only provides for the sowl; but theirs, you see, provides any how for the body—and faith, I say, the last is a great advantage in these hard times."

The priest's astonishment increased at the boldness with which Darby continued the argument, or rather, which prompted him to argue at all. He looked at him, and gave a smile.

"Well," said he, almost forgetting his anger—for he was by no means deficient in a perception of the humorous—"but no matter—it will do by and by. You villain," said he, forced into the comic spirit of the argument; "do you not know that it said—cursed is he who becometh an apostate, and eateth the flesh of heretics."



"WHERE ARE YOU BOUND FOR NOW? TO TASTE OF MR. LUCRE'S FLESH-POTS—EH?"

—*Val M'Clutchy*, chap. xi., p. 216.

"Aitin' the flesh of heretics is forbidden, I dare say, sure enough," replied Darby; "an' troth it's a commandment not likely to be broken—for dirty morsels they are, God knows; but is there anything said against aitin' the flesh of their sheep or cows—or that forbids us to have a touch at a good fat goose, or a turkey, or any harmless little trifle o' the kind? Troth myself never thought, sir, that beef or mutton was of any particular religion before."

"Yes, sir; beef and mutton, when they're good, are Catholic—but when they're lean, why, like a bad Christian, they're Protestant, of course, and that's well known," said the priest, still amused, against his will, by Darby's arguments.

"Faith, and wid great respect, the same is but a poor argument for your own—hem—I mane, sir, for *your* church; for if the best beef and mutton be of the thrue religion, the Protestants have it all to nothing. There, they're infallible, and no mistake. The fat o' the land, your reverence," said Darby, with a wink; "don't you understand? They've got that any how."

A slight cut of the whip across the shoulders made him jump and rub himself, whilst the priest, struck with his utter want of principle, exclaimed.

"You double-dealing scoundrel, how dare you wink at me, as if we felt anything in common?"

The blow occasioned Darby's gorge to rise; for like every other knave, when conscious of his own dishonesty, and its detection, he felt his bad passions overpower him.

"You must," said the priest, whose anger was now excited by his extraordinary assurance—"you must renounce their religion, you must renounce M'Slime and Lucre—their flitches, flannels, and friezes. You must—"

"Beggin' your pardon," said Darby, "I never received any of their flitches or their flannels. I don't stand in need of them—it's an enlightened independent convart I am."

"Well, then," continued the priest, "you must burn their tracts and their treatises, their books and Bibles of every description, and return to your own church."

"To become acquainted," replied Darby, "with that piece o' doctrine in your hand there? Faith and I *feel* the truth o' that as it is, your reverence; and it is yourself that can bring it home to one. But, why, wid submission, don't you imitate Father Roche? By me sowl, I tell you to your face, that so long as you take your divinity from the saddler's shop, so long you will have obedient men, but indifferent Catholics."

"What!" replied M'Cabe, in a rage, "do you dare to use such language to my face—a reprobate—a brazen contumacious apostate! I've had this *in* for you; and now (here he gave him a round half dozen) go off to M'Slime, and Lucre, and Lord ——, and when you see them, tell them from me, that if they don't give up perverting my flock, I'll give them enough of their own game."

Darby's face got pale, with a most deadly expression of rage—an expression, indeed, so very different from that cringing, creeping one which it usually wore, that M'Cabe, on looking at him, felt startled, if not awed, intrepid and exasperated as he was. Darby stood and looked at him coldly, but, at the same time, with unflinching fearlessness in the face.

"You have done it," he said, "and I knew you would. Now, listen to me—are you not as aiger to make convarts as either M'Slime or Lucre?"

"You will have it again, you scoundrel," said the curate, approaching him with uplifted whip.

"Stand back," said Darby, "I've jist got all I wanted—stand back, or by all the vestments ever you wore, if your whip only touches my body, as light as if it wouldn't bend a feather, I'll have you in heaven, or purgatory, before you can cry 'God forgive me.'"

The other still advanced, and was about to let the whip fall, when Darby stretched his right hand before him, holding a cocked and loaded pistol presented to the curate's breast.

"Now," said he, let your whip fall if you like; but if you do, I'll lodge this bullet," touching the pistol with his left forefinger, "in your heart, and your last mass is said. You blame Lucre and M'Slime for making convarts; but aren't you every bit as anxious to bring over the Protestants as they are to bring over *us?* Aren't you paradin' them Sunday afther Sunday, and boastin' that you are takin' more from the heretics than they are takin' from you? Wasn't your last convart Bob Beatty, that you brought over because he had the fallin' sickness, and you left it upon him never to enter a church door, or taste bacon; and now you have him that was a rank Orangeman and a blood-hound six weeks ago, a sound Catholic to-day? Why, your reverence, with regard to convart makin' divil the laist taste o' differ I see between you on either side, only that they are able to give betther value in this world for the change than you are—that's all. You're surprised at seeing my pistols, but of late I don't go any where unprovided; for, to tell you the thruth, either as a bailiff or a convart, it's not likely I'd be safe widout them; and I think that yourself are a very good proof of it."

"Very well, my good, fine, pious convart; I'll keep my eye on you. I understand your piety."

"And I can tell you, my good, meek, pious priest, I'll keep mine on you; and now pass on, if you're wise—and so *bannath lath*."

Each then passed on, pursuing his respective destination. They had not gone far, however, when both chanced to look back at the same moment—M'Cabe shook his whip, with a frown, at Darby, who, on the other side, significantly touched the pocket in which he carried his fire-arms, and nodded his head in return.

Now, it is an undeniable fact, that characters similar to that of Darby, were too common in the country; and, indeed, it is to be regretted that they were employed at all, inasmuch as the insolence of their conduct, on the one hand, did nearly as much harm as the neglect of the hard-hearted landlord himself, on the other. Be this as it may, however, we are bound to say that Darby deserved much more at M'Cabe's hands than either that Rev. gentleman was aware of then, or our readers now. The truth was, that no sooner had M'Slime's paragraph touching Darby's conversion gone abroad, than he became highly unpopular among the Catholics of the parish. Father M'Cabe, in consequence of Darby's conduct, and taking him as a specimen, uttered some lively prophecies, touching the ultimate fate of the new Reformation. He even admonished his flock against Darby:—

"I have warned you all now," he said, "and if after this I hear of a single perversion, woe be unto that pervert, for it is better for his miserable soul that he had never been born. Is there a man here base enough to sell his birthright for a mess of Mr. Lucre's pottage? Is there a man here, who is not too strongly imbued with a hatred of heresy, to laugh to scorn their bribes and their Bibles. Not a man, or, if there is, let him go out from amongst us, in order that we may know him—that we may avoid his outgoings and his incomings—that we may flee from him as a pestilence—a plague—a famine. No, there is none here so base and unprincipled as all that—and I here prophesy that from this day forth, this Reformation has got its death-blow—and that time will prove it. Now, remember, I warn you against their arts, their bribes, and their temptations—and if, as I said, any one of this flock shall prove so wicked as to join them—then, I say again, better for his unfortunate soul that he had never come into existence, than to come in contact with this leprous and polluted heresy."

Darby having heard—for he never went to mass—that he was denounced by the priest, and feeling that his carrying into execution the heartless and oppressive proceedings of M'Clutchy had, taken together, certainly made him as unpopular a man as any individual of his contemptible standing in life could be, resolved, in the first place, to carry arms for his own protection, and, in the next, to take a step which he knew would vex the curate sorely. Accordingly, he lost no time in circulating, and having it circulated by others, that the great Reformation Society would give, in a private way, five guineas a head to every convert, taking them either by the individual or the family, although the conversion of the latter, he said, was far more coveted than even a greater number of individuals, when they were not bound by the same ties of blood, inasmuch, as the bringing them over by families was an outpouring of grace which could not be withstood. The consequence was, that all the profligate and unprincipled who had cold, and nakedness, and famine, in addition to their own utter want of all moral feeling to stimulate them, looked upon the new Reformation and its liberal promises as a complete windfall blown into their way by some unexpected piece of good fortune. Five guineas a head! And all for only going to church, and gaining for ever more the heart and affections of the good and kind Lord——. There was also another class, the simple and honest poor, who had no other way of avoiding all the rigors and privations of that terrible season, than a painful compliance with the only principle which could rescue themselves and their children, from a state of things worse than death itself—and which might probably have terminated in death—we mean the principle of the new Reformation. There was, still, a third class—which consisted of a set of thorough Irish wags, who looked upon the whole thing as an excellent joke—and who, while they had not a rag to their backs, nor a morsel for their mouths, enjoyed the whole ceremony of reading their recantation, renouncing Popery, and all that, as a capital spree while it lasted, and a thing that ought by all means to be encouraged, until better times came.

In vain, therefore, did Father M'Cabe denounce and prophesy—in vain did he launch all the dogmas of the church—in vain did he warn, lecture, and threaten—Darby's private hint had gone abroad precisely a day or two before their encounter, and the consequence was what might be expected. Darby, in fact, overreached him, a circumstance of which, at the period of their meeting, he was ignorant; but he had just learned how "the word," as it was called, had spread, in so ex-

traordinary a manner, maugre all his opposition a short time before they met; and our readers need not feel surprised at the tone and temper with which, after having heard such intelligence, he addressed Darby, nor at the treatment which that worthy personage received at his hands. Had he known that it was Darby's "word" which in point of fact had occasioned "the spread" we speak of, he would have made that worthy missionary exhibit a much greater degree of alacrity than he did.

Before Darby arrives at Mr. Lucre's, however, we must take the liberty of anticipating him a little, in order to be present at a conversation which occurred on this very subject between the worthy Rector and the Rev. Mr. Clement, his curate. Mr. Clement, like the pious and excellent Father Roche, was one of those clergymen who feel that these unbecoming and useless exhibitions, called religious discussions, instead of promoting a liberal or enlarged view of religion, are only calculated to envenom the feelings, to extinguish charity, and to contract the heart. Nay, more, there never was a discussion, they said—and we join them—since the days of Ussher and the Jesuit, that did not terminate in a tumult of angry and unchristian recrimination, in which all the common courtesies of life, not to mention the professed duties of Christian men, were trampled on, and violated without scruple. In the preparations for the forthcoming discussion, therefore, neither of these worthy men took any part whatsoever. The severe duties of so large a parish, the calls of the sick, the poor, and the dying, together with the varied phases of human misery that pressed upon their notice as they toiled through the obscure and neglected paths of life, all in their opinion, and, in ours, too, constituted a sufficiently ample code of duty, without embroiling themselves in these loud and turbulent encounters.

Mr. Clement, who, on this same day, had received a message from Mr. Lucre, found that gentleman in remarkably good spirits. He had just received a present of a fine haunch of venison from a fox-hunting nobleman in the neighborhood, and was gloating over it, ere its descent into the larder, with the ruddy fire of epicurism blazing in his eyes.

"Clement," said he, with a grave, subdued grunt of enjoyment, "come this way—turn up the venison, Francis—eh, what say you now, Clement? Look at the depth of the fat!—what a prime fellow that was!—see the flank he had!—six inches on the ribs at least! As our countryman, Goldsmith, says, 'the lean was so white, and the fat was so ruddy.'"

Clement had often before witnessed this hot spirit of luxury, which becomes doubly carnal and gross in a minister of God. On this occasion he did not even smile, but replied gravely, "I am not a judge of venison, Mr. Lucre; but, I believe you have misquoted the poet, who, I think, says, 'the fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy.'"

"Well, that's not much, Clement; but, if you were a judge, this would both delight and astonish you. Now, Francis, I charge you, as you value your place, your reputation, your future welfare, to be cautious in dressing it. You know how I wish it done, and, besides, Lord Mountmorgage, Sir Harry Beevor, Lord ——, and a few clerical friends, are to dine with me. Come in Clement—Francis, you have heard what I said! If that haunch is spoiled, I shall discharge you without a character most positively, so look to it."

When they entered the library, the table of which was covered with religious magazines, missionary papers, and reports of religious societies, both at home and abroad, Mr. Lucre, after throwing himself into a rich cushioned arm-chair, motioned to his curate to take a seat.

"I have sent for you, Clement," said he, "to have your advice and assistance on a subject, in which, I feel confident, that as a sincere and zealous Protestant, you will take a warm interest. You have heard of the establishment of our New Reformation Society, of course."

"I believe it is pretty generally known," replied Clement.

"It is now," replied Lucre; "but our objects are admirable. We propose to carry controversy into all the strongholds of Popery—to enlighten both priest and people, and, if possible, to transfer the whole Popish population—*per satiram*—by the lump, as it were—"

"*Per saturum*, I believe," observed Clement, bowing, "if I may take the liberty."

"Sati, satu—well, you may be right; my memory, Clement, retains large passages best, and ever did—to transfer the whole Popish population to the Established Church. It is a noble, a glorious speculation, if it only can be accomplished. Think of the advantages it would confer upon us! What stability would it not give the Church."

"I cannot exactly see what peculiar stability it would give the Church," replied Clement, "with the exception of mere numbers alone."

"How so—what do you mean?"

"Why, sir," replied Clement, "if we had the numbers you speak of to-morrow, we

would be certainly worse off than we are to-day. They could only pay us our tithes, and that they do as it is; if they formed a portion, and the largest portion they would form, of our church, think of the immense number of clergy they would require to look to their religious wants—the number of churches and chapels of ease that must be built—the number of livings that must be divided—nay, my dear sir, in addition to this, you may easily see, that for every one bishop now, we should have at least four, then, and that the incomes would diminish in proportion. As it is now, sir, we have the tithes without the trouble of laboring for them, but it would be a different case in your new position of affairs."

Mr. Lucre, who, in the heat of his zeal, had neither permitted himself to see matters in this light, nor to perceive that Clement's arguments concealed, under a grave aspect, something of irony and satire, looked upon his curate with dismay—the smooth and rosy cheek got pale, as did the whole purple face down to the third chin, each of which reminded one of the diminished rainbows in the sky, if we may be allowed to except that they were not so heavenly.

"Clement," said he, "you amaze me—that is a most exceedingly clear view of the matter. Transfer them! no such thing, it would be a most dreadful calamity, unless church property were proportionably increased; but, could not that be done, Clement? Yes," said he, exulting at the idea, as one of which he ought to feel proud, "that could and would be done—besides I relish the multiplication of the bishoprics, under any circumstances, and therefore we will proceed with the Reformation. At all events, it would be a great blessing to get rid of Popery, which we would do, if we could accomplish this glorious project."

"I must confess, sir," replied Mr. Clement gravely, "that I have never been anxious for a mere change of speculative opinions in any man, unless when accompanied by a corresponding improvement in his life and morals. With respect to the Reformation Society, I beg leave to observe that I think the plan for the present is unseasonable, and only calculated to fill the kingdom with religious dissention and hatred. The people, sir, are not prepared to have their religion taken by storm; they are too shrewd for that; and I really think we have no just cause to feel anxious for the conversion of those who cannot appreciate the principles upon which they embrace our faith, as must be the case with ninety-nine out of every hundred of them. I have ever been of opinion that the policy pursued by England towards this country has been the bane of its happiness. She deprived the Irish Roman Catholics of the means of acquiring education, and then punished them for the crimes which proceeded from their ignorance. They were a dissatisfied, a tumultuous, and an impracticable, because they were an oppressed, people; and where, by the way, is there a people, worthy to be named such, who will or ought to rest contented under penal and oppressive laws. But there was a day when they would have been grateful for the relaxation of such laws. Oppression, however, has its traditions, and so has revenge, and these can descend from father to son, without education. If Roman Catholic disabilities had been removed at a proper time, they would long since have been forgotten, but they were not, and now they are remembered, and will be remembered. The prejudices of the Roman Catholics, however, and their enmity towards those who oppressed them, increased with their numbers and their knowledge. The religion of those who kept them down was Protestant; and think you, sir, that, be the merits of that religion what they may, these are the people to come over in large masses, without esteem for us, reflection, or any knowledge of its principles, and embrace the creed of the very men whom they look upon as their oppressors. Sir, there is but one way of converting the Irish, and it this:—Let them find the best arguments for Protestantism in the lives of its ministers, and of all who profess it. Let the higher Protestant clergy move more among the humbler classes even of their own flocks—let them be found more frequently where the Roman Catholic priest always is—at the sick-bed—in the house of mourning, of death, and of sin—let them abandon the unbecoming pursuits of an ungodly ambition—cast from them the crooked and dishonest manœuvres of political negotiation and intrigue—let them live more humbly, and more in accordance with the gospel which they preach—let them not set their hearts upon the church merely because it is a wealthy corporation, calculated rather to gratify their own worldly ambition or cupidity, than the spiritual exigencies of their own flocks—let them not draw their revenues from the pockets of a poor people who disclaim their faith, whilst they denounce and revile that faith as a thing not to be tolerated. Let them do this, sir—free Protestantism from the golden shackles which make it the slave of Mammon, that it may be able to work—do this, and depend upon it, that it will then flourish as it ought; but, in my humble opinion, until such a reform first takes place with ourselves, it is idle to expect that Roman Catholics will

come over to us, unless, indeed, a few from sordid and dishonest motives—and these we were better without. I think, therefore, that the present Reformation Society is unseasonable and ill-advised, nor do I hesitate to predict that the event will prove it so. In conclusion, sir, I am sorry to say, that I've seldom seen one of those very zealous clergymen who would not rather convert one individual from Popery than ten from sin."

"Why, Clement, you are a liberal!"

"I trust, sir, I am a Christian. As for liberalism, as it is generally understood, no man scorns the cant of it more than I do. But I cannot think that a Roman Catholic man sincerely worshipping God—even with many obvious errors in his forms, or, with what we consider absurdities in his very creed—I cannot think, I say, that such a man, worshipping the Almighty according to his knowledge, will be damned. To think so is precisely the doctrine of exclusive salvation, with which we charge Popery itself."

Mr. Lucre's face, during the enunciation of these sentiments, glowed like a furnace thrice heated—he turned up his eyes—groaned aloud—struck the arm of his chair with his open hand—then commenced fanning his breast, as if the act were necessary to cool that evangelical indignation, in which there is said to be no sin.

"Clement," said he, "this—this"—here he kept fanning down his choler for half a minute—"this is—astonishing—awful—monstrous—monstrous doctrine to come from the lips of a clergyman—man"—another fanning—"of the Established Church; but what is still worse, from—from—the lips of my curate! my curate! I'll trouble you to touch the bell—thank you, sir. But, Mr. Clement, the circumstance of giving utterance to such opinions, so abruptly, as if you were merely stating some common-place fact—without evincing the slightest consideration for me—without reflecting upon who and what I am—without remembering my position—my influence—the purity and orthodoxy of my doctrine—the services I have rendered to religion, and to a Protestant government—(John, a glass of water; quickly)—you forget, sir, that I have proved the Romish Church to be both damnable and idolatrous—that she is without the means of salvation—that her light is out—her candlestick removed—and that she is nothing now but darkness, and abomination, and blasphemy. Yes, sir; knowing all this, you could openly express such doctrines, without giving me a moment's notice, or anything to prepare me for such a shock!—sir, I am very much distressed indeed; but I thank my God that this excitement—(bring it here, John; quick)—that this excitement is Christian excitement—Christian excitement, Mr. Clement; for I am not, I trust, without that zeal for the interests of my church, of my King, and of Protestantism at large, which becomes a man who has labored for them as I have done."

Here, notwithstanding the excessive thirst which seemed to have fastened on him, he put the glass to his lips; but, sooth to say, like the widow's cruse, it seemed to have been gifted with the miraculous property of going from his lips as full as when it came to them.

"I assure you, Mr. Lucre," replied Clement, "in uttering my sentiments, I most certainly had not the slightest intention of giving you offence. I spoke calmly, and candidly, and truly, what I think and feel—and I regret that I should have offended you so much; for I only expressed the common charity of our religion, which hopeth all things—is slow to condemn, and forbids us to judge, lest we be judged."

"Clement," said Mr. Lucre, who, to speak truth, had ascribed his excitement—what a base, servile, dishonest, hypocritical scoundrel of a word is that excitement—ready to adopt any meaning, to conceal any failing, to disguise any fact, to run any lying message whatsoever at the beck and service of falsehood or hypocrisy. If a man is drunk, in steps excitement—Lord, sir, he was only excited, a little excited;—if a man is in a rage, like Mr. Lucre, he is only excited, moved by Christian excitement—out upon it!—but, like every other slavish instrument, we must use it—had ascribed his excitement, we say, to causes that had nothing whatsoever to do in occasioning it—the *bonâ fide* one being the indirect rebuke, to him, and the class to which he belonged, that was contained in Clement's observations upon the Established Church and her ecclesiastics. "Clement," said he, "I must be plain with you. For some time past I have really suspected the soundness of your views—I had doubts of your orthodoxy; but out of consideration for your large family, I did not press you for an explanation."

"Then, sir," replied Clement, "allow me to say, that as an orthodox clergyman, jealous of the purity of our creed, and anxious for the spiritual welfare of your flock, it was your duty to have done so. As for me, I shall be at all times both ready and willing to render an account of the faith that is in me. I neither fear nor deprecate investigation, sir, I assure you."

"I certainly knew not, however, that you were so far gone in latitudinarianism, as I find, unfortunately, to be the case. I hold

a responsible—a sacred situation, as a Protestant minister, Mr. Clement, and consequently cannot suffer such doctrine to spread through my flock. Besides, had you taken an active part in promoting this Reformation, as, with your learning and talents I know you could have done—I make no allusion now to your unhappy principles—had you done so it was my fixed intention to have increased your salary ten pounds per annum, out of my own pocket, notwithstanding the great claims that are upon me."

"My legal salary, I believe, Mr. Lucre, is seventy-five pounds per annum, and the value of your benefice is one thousand four hundred. I may say the whole duty is performed by me. Out of that one thousand four hundred, I receive sixty; but I shall add nothing more—for indeed I have yet several visits to make before I go home. As to my orthodoxy, sir, you will take your own course. To my bishop I am ready to explain my opinions; they are in accordance with the Word of God; and if for entertaining them I am deprived of the slender support for which I labor, as your curate, my trust in God will not be the less."

Mr. Lucre declined any reply, but bowed very politely, and rang the bell, to order his carriage, as a hint to Mr. Clement that the conversation was closed. The latter bowed, bade him good morning, and departed.

When Mr. Clement said he had some visits to make, we must, lest the reader might suppose they are visits of ceremony, follow his steps in order to learn the nature of these visits.

About half a mile from the Glebe house of Castle Cumber, the meek and unassuming curate entered into an abode of misery and sorrow, which would require a far more touching pen than ours to describe. A poor widow sat upon the edge of a little truckle bed with the head of one of her children on her lap; another lay in the same bed silent and feeble, and looking evidently ill. Mr. Clement remembered to have seen the boy whom she supported, not long before playing about the cottage, his rosy cheeks heightened into a glow of health and beauty by the exercise, and his fair, thick-clustered hair blown about by the breeze. The child was dying, and the tender power of a mother's love prompted her to keep him as near her breaking heart as she could, during the short space that remained of his brief existence. When Mr. Clement entered, the lonely mother looked upon him with an aspect of such bitter sorrow, of such helpless supplication in her misery, as if she said, am I left to the affliction of my own heart! Am I cut off from the piety and comfort, which distress like mine ought to derive from Christian sympathy and fellowship! Have I not even a human face to look upon, but those of my dying children! Such in similar circumstances are the questions which the heart *will* ask. She could not immediately speak, but with the head of her dying boy upon her heart she sat in mute and unbroken agony, every pang of her departing orphan throwing a deeper shade of affliction over her countenance, and a keener barb of sorrow into her heart.

The champion of God, however, was at his post. He advanced to the bed-side, and in tones which proclaimed the fulness of his sympathy in her sufferings, and with a countenance lit up by that trust in heaven which long trials of his own and similar bereavements had given him, he addressed her in words of comfort and consolation, and raised her heart to better hopes than any which this world of care and trial can bestow. It is difficult, however, to give comfort in such moments, nor is it prudent to enforce it too strongly. The widow looked upon her boy's face, which was sweetly marked with the graces of innocence, even in the throes of death. The light of life was nearly withdrawn from his dim blue eye; but he felt from time to time for the mother's hands, and the mother's bosom. He was striving, too, to utter his little complaints; attempting probably to describe his sufferings and to beg relief from his unhappy parent; but the dissolving power of death was on all his faculties; his words lapsed into each other indistinctly, and were consequently unintelligible. Mrs. Vincent, for such was the widow's name, heard the words addressed to her by Mr. Clement; she raised her eyes to heaven for a moment, and then turned them, heavy with misery, upon her dying boy. Her heart—her hopes—almost her whole being were peculiarly centered in the object before her; and though she had imagined that sympathy might support her, she now felt that no human power could give her consolation. The tears were falling fast from Mr. Clement's cheeks, who felt, that until the agonies of the boy were over, it would be vain to offer her any kind of support. At length she exclaimed—

"Oh! Saviour, who suffered the agony of the cross, and who loved little children like him, let your mercy descend upon my beloved! Suffer him to come to you *soon*. Oh! Saviour—hear a mother's prayer, for I loved him above all, and he was our life! Core of my heart, you are striving to tell your mother what you suffer, but the weight of death is upon your tongue, and you cannot do it! I am here, my beloved sufferer—I am

here—you struggle to find my hands to tell me—to tell me—but I cannot help you."

"Mrs. Vincent," said the curate, "we have reason to believe that what appears to us to be the agony of death, is not felt so severely as we imagine; strive to moderate your grief—and reflect that he will soon be in peace, and joy, and happiness, that will never end. His little sorrows and sufferings will soon be over, and the bosom of a merciful God will receive him into life and glory."

"But, sir," replied the widow, the tears fast streaming down her cheeks, "do you not see what he suffers? Look at the moisture that is on his little brow, and see how he writhes with the pain. He thinks that I can stop it, and it is for that he presses my hand. During his whole illness that was still his cry—'oh, mother, take away this pain, why don't you take away the pain!'"

Mr. Clement was a father, and an affectionate one, and this allusion to the innocence of the little sufferer touched his heart, and he was silent.

The widow proceeded: "there he lies, my only—only son—his departed father's image, and I looked up to him to be one day my support, my pride, and my happiness—but see what he is now! Oh! James, James, wouldn't I lay down my life to save yours!"

"You look at the dark side of the picture, Mrs. Vincent," said the curate. "Think upon what he may escape by his early and his happy death. You know not, but that there was crime, and sin, and affliction before him. Consider how many parents there are now in the world, who would feel happy that their children, who bring shame, and distress, and misery upon them, had been taken to God in their childhood. And, surely, there is still a God to provide for yourself and your other little ones; for remember, you have still those who have tender claims upon your heart."

"I know you are right, sir," she replied, "but in cases like this, nature must have its way. Death, death, but you're cruel! Oh—blessed Father, what is this!"

One last convulsive spasm, one low agonizing groan, accompanied by a relaxation of the little fingers which had pressed her hands, closed the sufferings of the widow's pride. She stooped wildly over him and pressed him to her heart, as if by doing so she could draw his pains into her own frame, as they were already in her spirit; but his murmurings were silent, and on looking closely into his countenance, she perceived that his Redeemer had, indeed, suffered her little one to go unto him; that all his little pains and agonies were over forever.

"His sufferings are past," she exclaimed, "James, your sufferings are over!" As she uttered the words, the curate was astonished by hearing her burst out into one or two wild hysteric laughs, which happily ended in tears.

"No more," she continued, "you'll feel no more pain now, my precious boy; your voice will never sound in my ears again; you'll never call on me to say 'mother, take away my pain;' the Sunday mornin' will never come when I will take pride in dressing you. My morning and evening kiss will never more be given—all my heart was fixed on is gone, and I care not now what becomes of me."

What could the good curate do? He strove to soothe, sustain, and comfort her, but in vain; the poor widow heard him not.

"Jenny," said she, at length, turning to the other sick child, "your brother is at rest! James is at rest; he will disturb your sleep now no more—nor will you disturb his."

"Oh! but he couldn't help it, mammy; it was the pain that made him."

As the child uttered these words, the widow put her hand to her heart, gave two or three rapid sobs—her bosom heaved, and her head fell back over a chair that was accidentally beside her. Mr. Clement caught her in time to prevent her from falling; he placed her upright on the chair, which he carried to the little dresser, where he found a jug of water, the only drink she had to give her sick children. With this he bathed her temples and wet her lips, after which he looked upon the scene of death and affliction by which he was surrounded.

"Gracious Father," he exclaimed, "let your mercy reach this most pitiable family! Look with eyes of pity and compassion upon this afflicted and bereaved woman! Oh, support her—she is poor and nearly heart-broken, and the world has abandoned her! Oh, do not abandon her, Father of all mercy, and God of all consolation!"

As he concluded, the widow recovered, and felt his tears falling upon her face. On looking she perceived how deeply he was affected. Her lips opened unconsciously with a blessing on him who shared in, and soothed her sorrows—her voice was feeble, for she had not yet recovered her strength; but the low murmur of her prayers and blessings rose like the sounds of sweet but melancholy music to heaven, and was heard there.

Mr. Clement then went over to the bed, and with his own hands smoothed it down for the little sick sister of the departed boy, adjusting the bed-clothes about her as well as he could, for the other children were too young to do anything. He then divided the

hair upon the lifeless child's forehead—contemplated his beautiful features for a moment—caught his little hand in his—let it fall—oh! how lifelessly! he then shook his head, raised his eyes, and pointing to heaven, exclaimed—

"*There—Mrs. Vincent, let your hopes lie there.*"

He then departed, with a promise of seeing her soon.

CHAPTER XII.

Interview between Darby and Mr. Lucre—Darby feels Scriptural, and was as Scripturally treated—Mr. Lucre's Christian Disposition towards Father M'Cabe—A few Brands offer Themselves to be Plucked from the Burning—Their Qualification for Conversion, as stated by Themselves.

Mr. Lucre, like almost every Protestant rector of the day, was a magistrate, a circumstance which prevented Mr. Clement from feeling any surprise at seeing a considerable number of persons, of both sexes, approaching the glebe. He imagined, naturally enough, that they were going upon law business, as it is termed—for he knew that Mr. Lucre, during his angel visits to Castle Cumber, took much more delight in administering the law than the gospel, unless, when ready made, in the shape of Bibles. When Darby, also, arrived, he found a considerable number of these persons standing among a little clump of trees in the lawn, apparently waiting for some person to break the ice, and go in first—a feat which each felt anxious to decline himself, whilst he pressed it very strongly upon his neighbor. No sooner had Darby made his appearance than a communication took place between him and them, in which it was settled that he was to have the first interview, and afterwards direct the conduct and motions of the rest. There was, indeed, a dry, knowing look about him, which seemed to imply, in fact, that they were not there without some suggestion from himself.

Darby was very well known to Mr. Lucre, for whom he had frequently acted in the capacity of a bailiff; he accordingly entered with something like an appearance of business, but so admirably balanced was his conduct on this occasion, between his usual sneaking and servile manner, and his privileges as a Christian, that it would be difficult to witness anything so inimitably well managed as his deportment. One circumstance was certainly strongly in his favor; Father M'Cabe had taken care to imprint with his whip a *prima facie* testimony of sincerity upon his countenance, which was black, and swollen into large welts by the exposition of doctrinal truth which he had received at that gentleman's hands. Lucre, on seeing him, very naturally imagined he was coming to lodge informations for some outrage committed on him either in the discharge of his duty as bailiff, or, for having become a convert, a fact with which he had become acquainted from the True Blue.

"Well, O'Drive," said he, "what is the matter now? you are sadly abused—how came this to pass?"

Darby first looked upwards, very like a man who was conscientiously soliciting some especial grace or gift from above; his lips moved as if in prayer, but he was otherwise motionless—at length he ceased—drew a long breath, and assumed the serenity of one whose prayer had been granted. The only word he uttered that could possibly be at all understood, was *amen;* which he pronounced lowly, but still distinctly, and in as unpopish a manner as he could.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he replied, "but now my heart's aisier—I hope I have overcome that feeling that was an me—I can now forgive him for the sake of the spread o' the gospel, and I do."

"What has happened your face?—you are sadly abused!"

"A small taste o' parsecution, sir, which the Lord put into Father M'Cabe's horsewhip—heart I mane—to give me, bekaise I renounced his hathenism, and came into the light o' thruth—may He be praised for it!" Here followed an upturning of the eyes after the manner of M'Slime.

"Do you mean to tell me, O'Drive, that this outrage has been committed on you by that savage priest, M'Cabe?"

"It was he left me as you see, sir—but it's good to suffer in this world, especially for the thruth. Indeed I am proud of this face," he continued, blinking with a visage so comically disastrous at Mr. Lucre, that had that gentleman had the slightest possible perception of the ludicrous in his composition, not all the gifts and graces that ever were poured down upon the whole staff of the Reformation Society together, would have prevented him from laughing outright.

"Of course you are come," pursued Lucre, "to swear information against this man?"

"I have prayed for it," said Darby in a soliloquy, "and I feel that it has been granted. Swear information, sir?—I'll strive and do betther than that, I hope; I must now take my stand by the Bible, sir; that will be the color I'll hoist while I live. In that blessed book I read these words this mornin', 'love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you,

and pray for them which despitefully use you and parsecute you.' Sir, when I read these words, I felt them sinkin' into my heart, and I couldn't help repeatin' them to myself, ever since—and, even when Father M'Cabe was playin' his whip about my ears, I was as hard at work prayin' for his sowl."

This, we have no doubt, was perfectly true, only we fear that our blessed convert forgot to state the precise nature and object of the prayer in question, and to mention whether it was to the upper or lower settlement he consigned the soul alluded to. This Christian spirit of Darby's, however, was by no means in keeping with that of Mr. Lucre, who never was of opinion, in his most charitable of moods, that the gospel should altogether supersede the law. On this occasion, especially, he felt an acuteness of anxiety to get the priest within his power, which the spirit of no gospel that ever was written could repress. M'Cabe and he had never met, or, at least, never spoke; but the priest had, since the commencement of the new movement, sent him a number of the most ludicrous messages, and transmitted to him, for selection, a large assortment of the most comical and degrading epithets. Here, then, was an opportunity of gratifying his resentment in a Christian and constitutional spirit, and with no obstacle in his way but Darby's inveterate piety. This, however, *for the sake of truth*, he hoped to remove, or so modify, that it would not prevent him from punishing that very disloyal and idolatrous delinquent.

"Those feelings, O'Drive, are all very good and creditable to you, and I am delighted indeed that you entertain them—but, in the meantime, you owe a duty to society greater than that which you owe to yourself. This man, this priest—a huge, ferocious person I understand he is—has latterly been going about the parish foaming and raging, and seeking whom he can horsewhip."

"That's thruth, sir, poor dark hathen—an', sir—jist beggin' your pardon for one minute, half a minute, sir—you know we're desired when an inimy strikes us upon one cheek to turn the other to him; well, as I said, sir, I found myself very Scriptural this whole day, so when he hot me the first welt on this cheek, I turns round the other, an' now look at the state it's in, sir—but that's not all, sir, he tuck the hint at once, and gave it to me on both sides, till he left me as you see me. Still, sir, I can forgive him, ay, and I have done it."

"That, as I said, reflects great credit on your principles—but, in the meantime, you can still retain these principles and prosecute him. Your lodging informations against him does not interfere with your own personal forgiveness of him at all—because it is in behalf of, and for the safety of society that you come forward to prosecute now."

Darby, who in point of fact had his course already taken, shook his head and replied, falling back upon the form of M'Slime's language as much as he could—

"I feel, sir," he replied, "that I'm not permitted."

"Permitted!" repeated the other. "What do you mean?"

"I'm not permitted from above, sir, to prosecute this man. I'm not justified in it."

"Quite ridiculous, O'Drive, where did you pick up this jargon of the conventicle—but that reminds me, by the by—you are not a convert to the Established Church. You belong to the Dissenters, and owe your change of opinions to Mr. M'Slime."

"If I don't belong to the Established Church now, sir," replied Darby, "I won't be long so."

"Why," inquired the other, "are you not satisfied with the denomination of Christians you have joined?"

"M'Slime, sir, converted me—as you say—but I've great objections—and between you and me, I fear it's not altogether *safe* for any man to take his religion from an attorney."

A smile, as much as he could condescend to, passed over the haughty, but dignified features of Mr. Lucre.

"O'Drive," said he, "I did not think you possessed so much simplicity of character as I perceive you do—but touching the prosecution of this man—you must lodge information, forthwith. You shall bring the warrant to Mr. M'Clutchy who will back it, and put it into the hands of those who will lose little time in having it executed."

"I am sorry, sir, that my conscience doesn't justify me in doin' what you wish."

"What do you mean by conscience, sir?" asked the other, getting warm, "if you have a conscience you will have no scruple in punishing a man who is an open enemy to truth, to the gospel, and to the spread of it through a benighted land. How can you reconcile it to your conscience to let such a man escape."

"Simply by forgiving him, sir—by lettin' the great, big, ignorant hathen, have the full benefit of a gospel forgiveness. That's what I mean, sir, and surely it stands to sense that I couldn't prosecute him wid these feelin's, barrin' I'd go against the Word."

"O'Drive," said Lucre, evidently mortified at Darby's obstinacy, "one of two things is true; either you are utterly ignorant, perhaps, with every disposition to know them,

of the sanctions and obligations of religion, or you are still a Papist at heart, and an impostor. I tell you, sir, once more, that it is upon religious grounds that you ought to prosecute this wild priest; because in doing so, you render a most important service to religion and morality, both of which are outraged in his person. You ought to know this. Again, sir, if you are a Protestant, and have thoroughly cast Popery from your heart, you must necessarily be a loyal man and a good subject; but if you refuse to prosecute him, you can be neither the one nor the other, but a Papist and an impostor, and I've done with you. If Mr. M'Clutchy knew, sir, that you refused to prosecute a priest for such a violent outrage upon your person, I imagine you would not long hold the situation of bailiff under him."

Darby looked into the floor like a philosopher solving a problem. "I see, sir," said he, "I see—well—you have made that clear enough sartinly; but you know, sir, how could you expect such deep raisoning upon these subjects from a man like me. I see the duty of it now clearly; but, then, sir, on the other hand if I prosecute him, what's to become of me? Will you, sir, bear my funeral expenses?"

"Every penny, O'Drive," replied the other, eagerly. "Tut," he exclaimed, checking himself, "I—I—I thought you meant the expenses of the prosecution."

"It's much the same, sir," replied Darby, "the one will be sure to follow the other. You know the state the country's in now, sir, and how the people on both sides are ready to skiver one another about this religion, and rents and tithes, and dear knows what besides. As it is, sir," he proceeded, "you see that I dursn't walk the road without these," and he produced the pistols as he spoke, "but what chance, sir, would I have if I prosecuted a priest? Why, my life wouldn't be worth two hours' purchase."

Mr. Lucre himself could not help feeling and admitting the truth of this, but as he could devise no plan to obviate the dangers alluded to, he still scrupled not to urge the prosecution.

"Sir," said Darby starting, as if a gleam of light had shot across his brain, "a thought has just struck me, and I hope it was something from above that sent it. If there was any kind of situation, sir, that I could fill, and that would keep me in a place of safety where the hathens couldn't get at me, everything would be right; and be the same token, sir, now that I think of it, isn't the under gaolership of Castle Cumber vacant this minute."

Lucre who, in fact, had set his heart on prosecuting and punishing the priest, would have gladly made Darby governor of the best gaol in his majesty's dominions, rather than lose this opportunity of effecting his purpose.

"Rest contented, O'Drive," he replied, "you shall have it—I pledge myself that you shall have it. My influence is sufficient for much more than so paltry a trifle as that. And now for the informations."

"Ah, sir," replied the other, "that wouldn't mend the matter a bit. Let it go once abroad that I swore them, and I'd never see to-morrow night. No, sir, if you wish him *properly* prosecuted,—and I think I ought to know how to do it, too;—but if you wish him properly punished, place me first out of harm's way—out o' the reach o' the hathens; put me into the situation before we take a single step in the business, then I'll be safe and can work in it to some purpose."

"It shall be done," said Lucre, "and I will go about it presently, but in the mean time the matter rests as it is. If what you say is true, and I believe it is, your own safety depends upon your silence."

"Not a breath," replied Darby; "and now, sir, about what brought me here—I wanted to say that I'd wish '*to read*' upon Sunday next."

"What do you mean?" asked Lucre.

"Why, sir, as I said, I don't like to take my religion from an attorney—and I'm afeard, besides, that he's not altogether orthybox, in regard that he hinted once that God was ——; but, indeed I disremember his words, for it wasn't aisy to hould them when you got them."

"He, of course, is a Fatalist and Predestinarian," said Lucre; "but what is this you were about to say?"

"Why, sir, that I'd wish publicly to read my recompensation in your church on Sunday next."

"And why in my church?" asked the proud parson, who felt his vanity touched, not by anything Darby had yet said, but by the indescribable expression of flattery which appeared in his face.

"Why, sir," he replied, "bekase it's given out on all hands that there's no end to your larnin'—that it's wondherful the books you wrote—and as for your preachin', that it 'ud make one think themselves in heaven, hell, or purgatory, accordin' as you wished."

"Very well, O'Drive, very well indeed," exclaimed Lucre, caught on his weakest side by this artful compliment; "but you must forget purgatory—however I can conceive that it was the mere force of habit that prompted you to utter it. Well, then, you shall read your recantation on Sunday, since you wish it—there will be about a dozen or two others, and you had better attend early. Good-day, O'Drive!"

"Plaise your honor," said Darby, who never could be honest to both parties, "there's a batch o' convarts outside waitin' to see you, but between you and me, I think you had as well be on your guard wid some o' them, I know what they want."

"And pray, what is that, O'Drive?"

"Why, thin, for fraid I may be doin' the crathurs injustice, sir, I won't say; only jist take my hint, any how. Good mornin' kindly, sir!"

As Darby passed the group we have alluded to, he winked at them very knowingly, "go up," said he, "go up I say:—may be I didn't give yez a lift since, and mark me, hould to the five guineas a head, and to be provided for aftherwards. Paddy Cummins do you go up, I say—*bannath lath!*"

Paddy went up, and in a few minutes a ragged, famine-wasted creature entered with his old caubeen between his hands, and after having ducked down his head, and shrugged his shoulders alternately, stood with an abashed look before Mr. Lucre.

"Well, my good man, what is your business with me?"

To this the countryman prepared to reply,—first, by two or three additional shrugs; secondly, by raising his right elbow, and pulling up all that remained of the collar of his tattered cothamore, or great coat, after which he gave a hem.

"Have you no tongue, my good fellow?"

A shrug—"hem—why, sir, but that was a great sarmon you praiched on last Sunda', plaise you honor. Faitha, sir, there was mighty fine discoorsin' in it about railligion?"

"O! the sermon—did you hear it, my good man?"

"Faitha, sir, I was there sure enough, in spite o' Father M'Cabe, an' all."

"Sit down, my good friend, sit down—well, you attended the sermon, you say—pray how did you like it?"

"Faitha, sir, sure nobody could dislike it; bedad, sir, we're all greatly disappointed wid the priests afther hearin' it—it was wondherful to hear the deep larnin' you brought forrid, sir, against them, an' our church in gineral. Begad myself was mightily improved by it."

"Don't swear, though—well you were improved by it, you say—pray what is your name?"

"I'm one Paddy Cummins, sir, a shister's son of—"

"Well, Cummins, I'm very happy to hear that you were edified, and happier still that you had sense to perceive the side upon which truth lay."

"Faitha, thin, your reverence, I seen *that* widout much throuble; but, sure they say, sir, there's to be a power of us turnin' over to yez."

"I hope so, Cummins—we are anxious that you should see the errors of the creed you so ignorantly profess, and abandon them."

"Sure enough, sir—dad, sir, your ministhers is fine men, so you are—then you're so rich, sir, plaise your honor—they do be sayin', sir, that the reverend gintlemen of your church have got a great deal of money among them somehow, in regard that it 'ud be needful to help poor crathurs that 'ud *turn*, and keep them from the parsecution, sir."

"Cummins, my good friend, allow me to set you right. We never give a penny of money to any one for the sake of bringing him over to our church; if converts come to us it must be from conviction, not from interest."

"I see, sir—but sure I'm not wantin' the *promise* at all, your honor—sure I know you must keep yourselves clear anyway—only the five guineas a head that I'm tould is to be given."

"Five guineas a head!—pray who told you so?"

"Faitha, sir, I couldn't exactly say, but every one says it. It's said we're to get five guineas a head, sir, and be provided for, afther; I have nine o' them, sir, eight crathurs and Biddy herself—she can't spake English, but, wid the help o' God, I could consthre it for her. Faith, she'd make a choice Prodestan, sir, for wanst she takes a thing into her head the devil wouldn't get it out. As for me, I don't want a promise at all, your reverence, barrin' that if it 'ud be plaisin' to you, jist to lay your forefinger along your nose—merely to show that we undherstand one another—it 'ud be as good to me as the bank. The crathur on the breast, your reverence, we'd throw in as a luck penny, or *dhuragh*, and little Paddy we give at half price."

"Did you hear all this?"

"Faitha, then, we did, sir—and sure, as you don't like to have the thing known, I can keep my tongue atween my teeth as well as e'er a convart livin'—an' as for Biddy, by only keepin' her from the dhrink, she's as close as the gate of heaven to a heretic. Bedad, sir, this new light bates everything."

"My good friend, Cummins, I tell you I have no money to give,—neither is there anything to be given,—for the sake of conversion—but, if your notions of your own religion are unsettled, put yourself under Lord ——'s chaplain; and, if, in the due course of time, he thinks you sufficiently improved to embrace our faith, you and your

family may be aided by some comforts suitable to your condition."

Cummins' face lengthened visibly at an intimation which threw him so far from his expectations; the truth being, that he calculated upon receiving the money the moment he read his recantation. He looked at Mr. Lucre again as significantly as he could —gave his head a scratch of remonstrance —shrugged himself as before—rubbed his elbow — turned round his hat slowly, examined its shape, and gave it a smarter set, after which he gave a dry hem and prepared to speak.

"I'll hear nothing further on the subject," said the other, "withdraw."

Without more ado Cummins slunk out of the room, highly disappointed, but still not without hopes from Lord ——, to whom, or his chaplain, he resolved to apply. In the meantime he made the best of his way home to his starving wife and children, without having communicated the result of his visit to those who were assembled at the glebe house.

He had scarcely left the hall door when another claimant for admission presented himself in the person of a huge, tattered fellow, with red, stiff hair standing up like reeds through the broken crown of his hat, which he took off on entering. This candidate for Protestantism had neither shoe nor stocking on him, but stalked in, leaving the prints of his colossal feet upon the hall through which he passed.

"Well, friend, what is wrong with you? —why did'nt you rub your filthy feet, sir, before you entered the room? You have soiled all my carpet."

"I beg your honor's parding," said the huge fellow; "I'll soon cure that." Having said which he trotted up to the hearth-rug, in which, before Lucre had time even to speak, by a wipe from each foot, he left two immense streaks of mud, which we guess took some hard scrubbing to remove. "Now, your honor, I hope I'll do."

Lucre saw it was useless to remonstrate with him, and said, with more temper than could be expected—

"Man, what's your business?"

"I come, sirra,"—this man had a habit of pronouncing sir as sirra, which he could never overcome—"to tell your reverence to enther me down at wanst."

"For what purpose should I enter you down?"

"For the money, sirra; I have seven o' them, and we'll all go. You may christen us if you wish, sirra. 'Deed I'm tould we must all be christened over agin, an' in that case, maybe it 'ud be plaisin' to you to stand godfather for me, yourself, your reverence."

"What do you mean?—but I suppose I understand you."

"I mean, sirra, to become a Protestan—I an' my family, I'm Nickey Feasthalagh, that was *in* on suspicion o' the burnin' of Nugent's hay; and by them five crasses I was as innocent of that as the child onborn, so I was. Sure they couldn't prove an me, becoorse I came out wid flying colors, glory be to God! Here I am now, sir, an' a right good Prodestan I'll make when I come to understand it. An' let me fwhisper this, sirra, I'll be dam useful in fairs and markets to help the Orangemen to lick ourselves, your honor, in a skrimmage or party fight, or anything o' that kidney."

"I am sorry, Nick Fistula, as you say your name is——"

"Nickey, sirra."

"Well, Nickey, or Nick, or whatever it may be, I am sorry to say that you won't do. You are too great an ornament to your own creed ever to shine in ours. I happen to know your character—begone."

"Is Misthre Lucre widin?" asked a third candidate, whose wife accompanied him—"if he is, maybe you'd tell him that one Barney Grattan wishes to have a thrifle o' speech wid his honor."

"Come in," said the servant with a smile, after having acquainted his master.

The man and his wife accordingly entered, having first wiped their feet as they had been ordered.

"Well, my good man, what's your business."

"Rosha, will you let his honor know what we wor spakin' about? She'll tell you, sir."

"Plaise your honor," said she, "we're convarts."

"Well," said Mr. Lucre, "that is at least coming to the point. And pray, my good woman, who converted you?"

"Faix, the accounts that's abroad, sir, about the gintleman from Dublin, that's so full of larnin', your reverance, and so rich, they say."

"Then it was the mere accounts that wrought this change in you?"

"*Dhamnu orth a Rosha, go dhe shin dher thu?*" said the husband in Irish; for he felt that the wife was more explicit than was necessary. "Never heed her, sir; the crathur, your reverence, is so through other, that she doesn't know what she's sayin', especially spakin' to so honorable a gentleman as your reverence."

"Then let us hear your version, or rather your conversion."

"Myself, sir, does be thinkin' a great deal about these docthrines and jinnyologies that people is now all runnin' upon. I can tell a

story, sir, at a wake, or an my kailee wid a neighbor, as well as e'er a man in the five parishes. The people say I'm very long headed all out, and can see far into a thing. They do, indeed, plaise your reverence."

"Very good."

"Did you ever hear about one Fin M'Cool who was a great buffer in his day, and how his wife put the trick upon a big bosthoon of a giant that came down from Munster to bother Fin? Did you ever hear that, sir?"

"No; neither do I wish to hear it just now."

"Nor the song of Beal Derg O'Donnel, sir, nor the 'Fairy River,' nor 'the Life and Adventures of Larry Dorneen's Ass,' plaise your reverence."

"No—but I wish you would allow your wife to relate your business here."

"Well, sir, the people say I'm very long-headed, and can see far into a thing—"

"But, my good man, I care not what the people say—tell your story briefly."

"—An' can see far into a thing, your reverence, becaise I'm long-headed. All long-headed people, sir, is cute, an' do you know why they're cute, sir? No, you don't, but I'll tell you—bekaise they're long-headed. Now, sir, what 'ud you think to turn Roman Catholic awhile till I'd malivogue you in arguin' Scripture?—I want to prove to you, sir, that I'm the boy that understhands things."

"What's your business with me?"

"Will you thry it, sir, and you'll see how I'll sober you to your heart's delight."

"What brought your husband to me, my good woman?"

"*Bhe dha husth; fag a rogarah lumsa.*"

"He's comin' to it, plaise your reverence," said the wife.

"Well, sir, so you see, bein' given to deep ways of thinkin' o' my own, I had many bouts at arguin' Scripthur—as every long-headed man has, of coorse—an' yestherday meetin' wid Brian Broghan, the mealman—him that keeps it up on the poor, sir—he challenged me, but, in three skips of a Scotch Gray, I sacked him cleaner than one of his own meal bags, and dusted him afterwards:—'so,' says he, 'misther Grattan, see what it is to be long-headed."

"It's worse," observed Lucre, "to be long-winded. Come to an end, sir."

"'Long-headed,' says he, 'an', of coorse you'll be takin' the money,' says Brougham; 'what money?' says I. 'Why, the five guineas,' says he, 'that the Biblemen is givin' to every one that will turn wid them, if he happens to be long-headed—but otherwise, not a penny.' So, sir, myself, you see, havin' the intention to come over long afore that, I thought it 'ud be best to do it now, for fraid yez might think it was for the money I am doin' it. But is there such a thing, sir?"

"Not a penny, and so you may tell your friends."

"Well, but, sir, grantin' that, still you'll acknowledge that I'm long-headed."

"No, only long-winded."

"Not long-headed, then?"

"No, certainly not."

"*Damnu orth a veehone bradagh!* come Rosha. Not long-headed! troth it's a poor religion to depind on—an' I'll make a show of it yet, if I'm spared. Come, woman alive."

Honest Barney was the last but one who was honored by a hearing, though not the last by a score of those who expected it, and, sooth to say, the appearance of that one threw the whole proceedings into such exquisite ridicule, that we cannot resist the temptation of giving his claims and arguments a place among the rest. The convert in question was no other than our old friend *Raymond-na-hattha*, or Raymond of the hats; who, moved by the example of others, and only possessed of a dim notion of the cause that brought them together, came among them from that vague motive of action which prompts almost every creature like him to make one in a crowd, wherever it may assemble. The mind of poor Raymond was of a very anomalous character indeed; for his memory, which was wonderful, accumulated in one heterogeneous mass, all the incidents in which he had ever taken any part, and these were called out of the confusion, precisely as some chord of association happened to be struck in any conversation which he held. For this reason he sometimes uttered sentiments that would have come with more propriety from the lips of a philosopher than a fool, and again fell to the level of pure idiotism, so singular were his alternations from sense to nonsense. Lucre's porter, himself a wag, knew perfectly well what was going forward, and, indeed, took very considerable delight in the movement. When Raymond presented himself, the porter, to whom he was very well known, determined, for the joke's sake, that he should have the honor of an interview as well as the rest. Lucre, as we said, being but seldom at Castle Cumber, was ignorant of Raymond's person and character, and, indeed, we may add, that he stood in a position precisely similar with respect to almost every one of his own flock. When Raymond entered, then, he was addressed in much the same terms as the others.

"Well, friend, what is your business?—

John, admit no more, and let the carriage come round—are you a convert also?"

"Yes, I am; what have you to give me?"

"A pure and peaceful religion, my friend."

"Where is it?"

"In this book—this is the Word of God, that preacheth peace and salvation to all."

"Has Val M'Clutchy this book?"

"Of course he has—it is not to be supposed that so able and staunch a friend of Protestantism, of the religion of the state, could be without this book, or ignorant of it."

Raymond put it up to his nose, and after seeming to smell it, said, with a strong shudder, "how did you do this among you? How did you do it?—look at it—see, see, it's dripping wid blood—here's murder on this page, there's starvation on that—there's the blood-hounds huntin'—look, sir, look at the poor creature almost worn down, makin' his way to hide, but he can't; they have him, they have him—see how they drag him, as if he was a—ay, drag, drag, he's yours now, he's yours—whip and scourge, whip and scourge—more blood, more blood—and this is it, *this*—don't you see it, sir, comin' down in drops when I hould it up that way!"

"My good friend, you are certainly in liquor—your language is that of a man strongly affected by drink."

"And this is it," Raymond proceeded; "look at this page, that's not the one the blood is on; no, no, there's nothing here but madness. Ah!" said he, lowering his voice to a tone of deep compassion, "sure she's mad; they killed Hugh O'Regan, and they killed the two sons, and then she went mad—so, you see, there it is now—on that page there's blood, and, on this one, with the big letter on it, there's madness. Then agin comes the Turnin' out. How would you like to walk three long, dreary miles, in sleet, and frost, and snow, havin' no house to go to—wid thin breeches to your bottom, an' maybe a hole in them—widout shoe or stockin' on your hooves—wid a couple of shiverin', half starved, sick childre, tied by an ould praskeen to your back, an' you sinkin' wid hunger all the time?—ay, and the tail o' your old coat blown up behind every minute, like a sparrow before the wind!—Eh, how would you like it?"

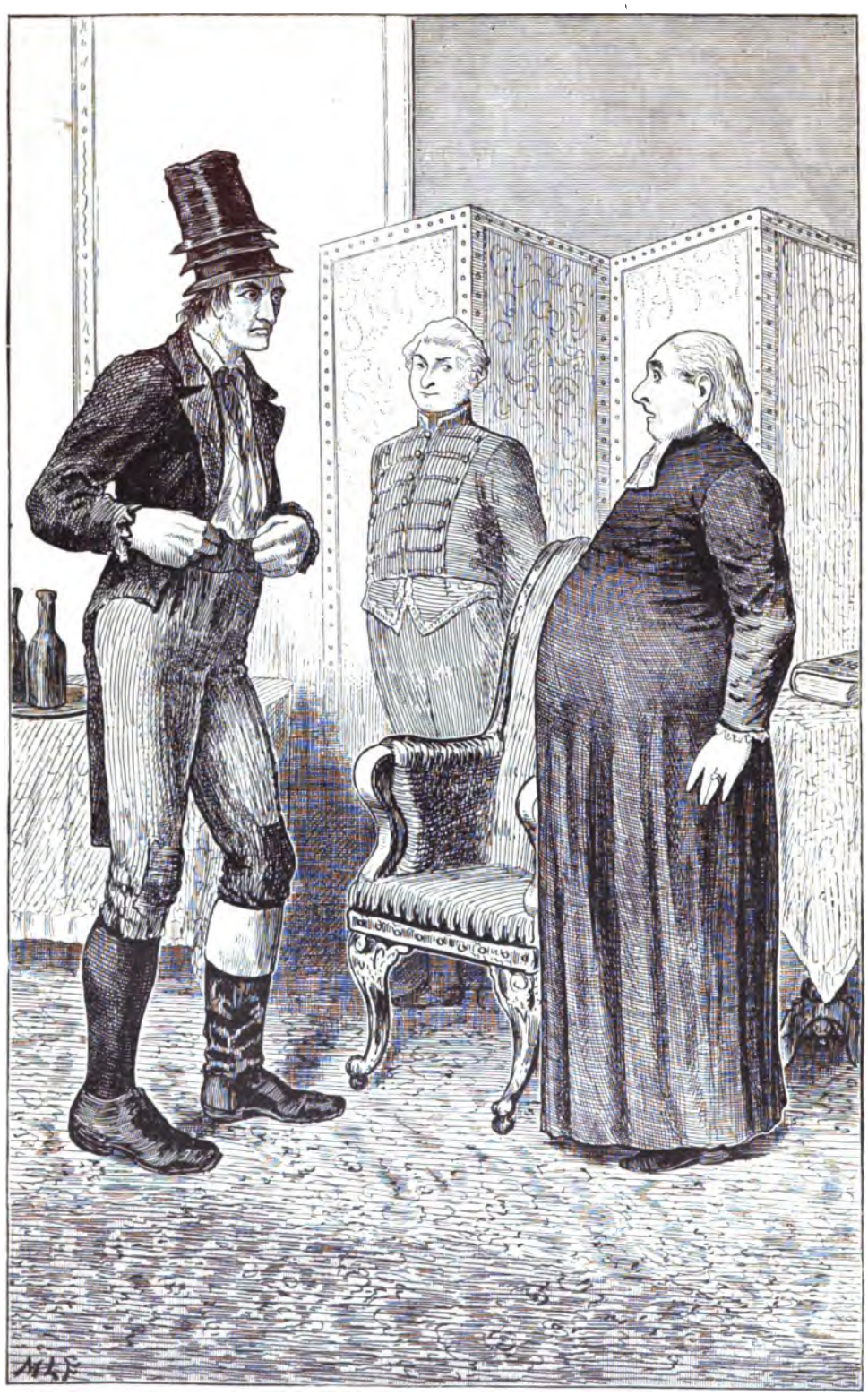
Lucre still stuck to the hypothesis of liquor, and accordingly went and rang the porter's bell, who immediately appeared.

"John," said his master, "I desire you will immediately show this man out—he is so scandalously affected with liquor, that he knows not the purport of his own language."

John approached his master with a face of awful terror:—"for God's sake, sir," said he, "don't say a word that might cross him, sure he's the great madman, *Raymond-na-hattha*. Just sit still, and let him take his own way, and he'll do no harm in life; appear to listen to him, and he'll be like a child—but, if you go to harshness, he'd tear you, and me, and all that's in the house, into minced meat."

Once more did Lucre's countenance lose its accustomed hue; but, on this occasion, it assumed the color of a duck egg, or something between a bad white and a bad blue:—"my good friend," said he, "will you please to take a seat—John, stay in the room." This he said in a whisper.

"There," proceeded Raymond, who had been busily engaged in examining the pages of the Bible, "there is the page where that's on—the puttin' out in the clouds and storm of heaven—there it is on *that* page. Look at the ould man and the ould woman there—see them tremblin'. Don't cry—don't cry; but they are—see the widow there wid her orphans—there's a sick boy in that house, and a poor sick girl in that other house—see, they're all cryin'—all cryin'—for they must go out, and on sich a day! All that, now, is upon these two other pages, bekaise, you see, no one page would hould all that. But see here—here's a page wid only one side of it covered—let us see what's on it. Oh, ay—here's the poor craythur's childre, wid the poor father and the poor mother; but they have the one cow to give milk to moisten their bit. Ha—ha—look again, there she goes off to the pound! Don't cry, poor helpless crathurs; but how can you help cryin' when your poor mother's cryin'. That's a bitther thing, too, and it's on this page—see—that—that—that's it I've between my fingers—look at it—how wet it is wid the poor craythur's tears; but there's no blood here—no, no—nothing but tears. Oh, here—see here—a lafe as big as the rest, but wid nothing on it. Ay, I know that—that's an empty farm that nobody dare take, or woe be to them. But here—I seen him"—here he shuddered strongly—"I seen him! His father and mother were both standing undher him—that was the worst of all. It's in this page. He was only one-and-twenty, and the eyes he had; but how did it happen, that although they hanged him, every one loved him? I seen his father and the poor mother looking up to the gallows where he stood, and then she fainted, and she then got sick, and poor ould Brian has nobody now but himself; and all that's on this page." Here poor Raymond shed tears, so completely was he overpowered by the force of his own imaginings. He again proceeded—"And the poor white-headed son. What wouldn't the



"I WANT TO BORROW THE LOAN OF YOUR RELIGION TILL THE NEW PRATIES COMES IN."
—*Val M'Clutchy*, chap. xii., p. 231.

poor mother give to have his white head to look at? but he will never waken—he will never waken more. What's the name o' this book?" he inquired of Mr. Lucre.

"My excellent and most intelligent friend," replied that gentleman, in a tone of meekness and humility that would have shamed an apostle; "my most interesting friend, the name of that book is the Bible."

"The Bible! oh yes; but am I doin' it right?" he inquired; "am I puttin' the explanation to it as I ought? Sure they all explain it, and it's only fair that Raymond should show his larnin' as well as any o' them. Let us see, then—murdher and bloodshed, hangin' and starvin', huntin', purshuin, whippin', cowld and nakedness, hunger and sickness, death and then madness, and then death agin, and then damnation! Did I explain it?"

"Perfectly, my friend—nothing can be better."

"Well, then, think of it; but these aren't my explanations—but I know who puts them to that bad book! Don't they take all I said out of it? They do; and, sure, don't you see the poor people's blood, and tears, and everything upon it; sure all I said is in it. Here," he exclaimed, shuddering, "take it away, or may be it'll make me as wicked as the rest of you. But, after all, maybe it's not the fault of the book, but of the people."

It would indeed be difficult to find a more frightful comment upon the crimes and atrocities which have been perpetrated in this divided country, in the name, and under the character of religion, than that which issued, with a kind of methodical incoherency, from the lips of Raymond-na-hattha. When he had concluded, Mr. Lucre, having first wiped the big drops of perspiration from his forehead, politely asked him if there was anything he could do for him.

"Oh, ay," said he; "but first bring me a lump of good mate, and a quart of porther."

"You shall have it, my excellent friend. John, ring the bell. You are a very interesting person, Mr.—Mr.——"

"Raymond-na-hattha, sir."

"Mr. Raiment—very interesting, indeed. (Good God! am I to run the risk of being strangled in my own house by a madman!) Oh—here, Alick; bring up some cold meat and a bottle of porter. Anything to make you comfortable, my good sir."

"I only want to see if all's right, sir," said Raymond, "and I'll tell you by and by." This was followed by a look of most pitiable distress from Lucre to his servant, John.

Raymond no sooner saw the cold beef and bread laid down, together with a bottle of porter, than he commenced an exhibition, which first awoke Mr. Lucre's astonishment, next his admiration, and lastly his envy. Raymond's performance, however, was of that rare description which loses by too frequent practice, and is only seen to advantage when the opportunities for exhibition are few. Three mortal pounds having at length disappeared, together with the greater part of a quartern loaf, and two bottles of porter, for Raymond had made bold to call for a second, he now wiped his mouth with the cuff of his coat first, and afterwards, by way of a more delicate touch, with the gathered palm of his hand; then, looking at Mr. Lucre, who sat perspiring with terror in his gorgeous easy chair, our readers may judge of the ease it just then communicated to that reverend gentleman, when he said, "It's all right enough, sir."

"I'm delighted to hear it," replied Mr. Lucre, applying the *sudariolum* once more with a very nervous and quivering hand to his forehead:

"Is there anything else in which I can serve you, my good sir?"

"Yes, there is—all's right, I've now made the thrial, and it will do—I want to borrow the loan of your religion till the new praties comes in."

"You shall have it, my worthy sir—you shall have it, with very great pleasure."

"The raison why I came to *you* for it," said Raymond, who, evidently in this joke, had been put up by some one, "was bekaise I was tould that it's as good as new with you —'*seldom used lasts long*,' you know—but, such as it is, I'll borry it for—ah, there now, that's one; all right, all right," pointing to the fragments of the meat and bread—"I wouldn't ax betther; so, till the praties comes in, mind I'll take care of it; and, if I don't bring it back safe, I'll bring you a betther one in it's place." He then nodded familiarly to Mr. Lucre, and left the house. The latter felt as if he breathed new life once more, but he could not so readily pardon the man for admitting him.

"What is the reason, sir," he asked, his face reddening, "that you suffered that formidable madman to get into the house?"

"Why, sir," replied the porter, "when I opened the door, he shot in like a bolt; and, as for preventing him after that, if I had attempted it, he'd have had me in fragments long ago. When he's not opposed, sir, or crossed, he's quiet as a lamb, and wouldn't hurt a child; but, if he's vexed, and won't get his own way, why ten men wouldn't stand him."

"Take care that he shall never be admitted here again," said his master; "I really am quite disturbed and nervous by his conduct

and language, which are perfectly unintelligible. Indeed I am absolutely unwell—the shock was awful, and to occur on such a day, too—I fear my appetite will be very much affected by it—a circumstance which would be distressing beyond belief. Stop—perhaps it is not yet too late—ask Francis is the venison down, and, if not, desire him not to dress it to-day—I am out of appetite, say."

John went, and in a couple of minutes returned, "Francis says it's down, sir, for some time," replied the man, "and that it must be dressed to-day, otherwise it will be spoiled."

"And this is owing to you, you scoundrel," said his master in a rage, "owing to your neglect and carlessness—but there is no placing dependence upon one of you. See, you rascal, the position in which I am—here is a delicious haunch of venison for dinner, and now I am so much agitated and out of order that my appetite will be quite gone, and it will be eaten by others before my face. while I cannot touch it. For a very trifle I would this moment discharge you from my service, and without a character too."

"I am very sorry, sir, but the truth—"

"Begone, you scoundrel, and leave the room, or I shall use the horse-whip to you."

John disappeared, and this great and zealous prop of Protestantism walked to and fro his study, almost gnashing his teeth from the apprehension of not having an appetite for the haunch of venison.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Controversial Discussion, together with the Virtues it Produced—Darby's Brief Retirement from Public Life.

Our readers may recollect that Darby in his pleasant dialogue with Father M'Cabe, alluded to a man named Bob Beatty, as a person afflicted with epilepsy. It was then reported that the priest had miraculously cured him of that complaint; but, whether he had or not, one thing, at least, was certain, that he became a Roman Catholic, and went regularly to mass. He had been, in fact, exceedingly notorious for his violence as an Orangeman, and was what the people then termed a blood-hound, and the son of a man who had earned an unenviable reputation as a Tory hunter; which means a person who devoted the whole energies of his life, and brought all the rancour of a religious hatred to the task of pursuing and capturing such unfortunate Catholics as came within grasp of penal laws. Beatty, like all converts, the moment he embraced the Roman Catholic creed, became a most outrageous opponent to the principles of Protestantism. Every Orangeman and Protestant must be damned, and it stood to reason they should, for didn't they oppose the Pope? Bob, then, was an especial protege of Father M'Cabe's, who, on his part, had very little to complain of his convert, unless it might be the difficulty of overcoming a habit of strong swearing which had brought itself so closely into his conversation, that he must either remain altogether silent, or let fly the oaths. Another slight weakness, which was rather annoying to the priest too, consisted in a habit Bob had, when any way affected with liquor, of drinking in the very fervor of his new-born zeal, that celebrated old toast, "to hell with the Pope!" These, however, were but mere specks, and would be removed in time, by inducing better habits. Now, it so happened, that on the day in question, Bob was wending his way to Father M'Cabe's, to communicate some matter connected with his religious feelings, and to ask his advice and opinion.

"How confoundedly blind the world is," thought Bob, "not to see that Popery—" he never called it anything else—"is the true faith! Curse me but Priest M'Cabe is a famous fellow!—Zounds, what an Orangeman he would make!—he's just the cut for it, an' it's a thousand pities he's not one—but!—what the hell am I sayin?' They say he's cross and ill-tempered, but I deny it—isn't he patient, except when in a passion? and never in a passion unless when provoked; what the d—l more would they have? I know I let fly an oath myself of an odd time (every third word, good reader), but, then, sure the faith is never injured by the vessel that contains it. Begad, but I'm sorry for my father, though, for, as there's no salvation out o' Popery, the devil of it is, that he's lost beyond purchase."

In such eccentric speculations did Bob amuse himself, until, in consequence of the rapid pace at which he went, he overtook a fellow-traveller, who turned out to be no other than our friend Darby O'Drive. There was, in fact, considering the peculiar character of these two converts, something irresistibly comic in this encounter. Bob knew little or nothing of the Roman Catholic creed; and, as for Darby, we need not say that he was thoroughly ignorant of Protestantism. Yet, nothing could be more certain—if one could judge by the fierce controversial cock of Bob's hat, and the sneering contemptuous expression of Darby's face, that a hard battle, touching the safest way of salvation, was about to be fought between them.

"HOW MANY ARTICLES IN MY CHURCH? THERE'S ONE BAD ONE IN YOUR CHURCH MORE THAN OUGHT TO BE IN IT, SINCE THEY GOT YOU."—*Val M'Clutchy*, chap. xiii., p. 233.

Bob, indeed, had of late been anxious to meet Darby, in order, as he said, to make him "show the cloven foot, the rascal;" but Darby's ire against the priest was now up; and besides, he reflected that a display of some kind would recommend him to the Reformationists, especially, he hoped, to Mr. Lucre, who, he was resolved, should hear it. The two converts looked at each other with no charitable aspect. Darby was about to speak, but Bob, who thought there was not a moment to be lost, gave him a controversial facer before he had time to utter a word:—"How many articles in your church?"

"How many articles in my church! There's one bad one in *your* church more than ought to be in it, since they got *you*:—but can you tell me how many sins cry to heaven for vengeance on you, you poor lost hathen?"

"Don't hathen me, you had betther; but answer my question, you rascally heretic."

"Heretic inagh! oh, thin, is it from a barefaced idolather like you that we hear heretic called to us! Faith, it's come to a purty time o' day wid us!"

"You're a blessed convart not to know the Forty-nine articles of your fat establishment!"

"And I'll hould a wager that you don't know this minute how many saikerments in your idolathry. Oh, what a swaggerin' Catholic you are, you poor hair-brained blackguard!"

"I believe you found some convincin' texts in the big purse of the Bible blackguards—do you smell that, Darby?"

"You have a full purse, they say, but, by the time Father M'Cabe takes the price of your trangressions out of it—as he won't fail to do—take my word for it, it'll be as lank as a stocking without a leg in it—do you smell that, Bob ahagur?"

"Where was your church before the Reformation?"

"Where was your face before it was washed?"

"Do you know the four pillars that your Church rests upon? because if you don't, I'll tell you—it was Harry the aigth, Martin Luther, the Law, and the Devil. Put that in your pipe and smoke it. Ah, what a purty boy you are, and what a deludin' face you've got!"

"So the priest's doin' you—he's the man can pluck a fat goose, Bob."

"Don't talk of pluckin' geese—you have taken some feathers out o' the Bible blades, by all accounts. How do you expect to be saved by joining an open heresy?"

"Whisht, you hathen, that has taken to idolathry bekase Father M'Cabe made an ass of you by a thrick that every one knows. But I tell you to your brazen face, that you'll be worse yet than ever you were."

"You disgraced your family by turnin' apostate, and we know what for. Little Solomon, the greatest rogue unhanged, gave you the only grace you got or ever will get."

"Why, you poor turncoat, isn't the whole country laughin' at you, and none more than your own friends. The great fightin' Orangeman and blood-hound turned voteen!—oh, are we alive afther that!"

"The blaggard bailiff and swindler turned swadler, hopin' to get a fatter cut from the Bible blades, oh!"

"Have you your bades about you? if you have, I'll throuble you to give us a touch of your Padareen Partha. Orange Bob at his Padareen Partha! ha, ha, ha."

"You know much about Protestantism. Blow me, but it's a sin to see such a knavish scoundrel professing it."

"It's a greater sin, you Orange omadhawn, to see the likes o' you disgracin' the bades an' the blessed religion you tuck an you."

"You were no disgrace, then, to the one you left; but you are a burnin' scandal to the one you joined, and they ought to kick you out of it."

In fact, both converts, in the bitterness of their hatred, were beginning to forget the new characters they had to support, and to glide back unconsciously, or we should rather say, by the force of conscience, to their original creeds.

"If Father M'Cabe was wise he'd send you to the heretics again."

"If the Protestants regarded their own character, and the decency of their religion, they'd send you back to your cursed Popery again."

"It's no beef atin' creed, any way," said Darby, who had, without knowing it, become once more a staunch Papist, "ours isn't."

"It's one of knavery and roguery," replied Bob, "sure devil a thing one of you knows only to believe in your Pope."

"You had betther not abuse the Pope," said Darby, "for fraid I'd give you a touch o' your ould complaint, the fallin' sickness, you know, wid my fist."

"Two could play at that game, Darby, and I say, to hell with him—and the priests are all knaves and rogues, every one of them."

"Are they, faith," said Darby, "here's an answer for that, anyhow."

"Text for text, you Popish rascal."

A fierce battle took place on the open

highway, which was fought with intense bitterness on both sides. The contest, which was pretty equal, might, however, have been terminated by the defeat of one of them, had they been permitted to fight without support on either side; this, however, was not to be. A tolerably large crowd, composed of an equal number of Catholics and Protestants, collected from the adjoining fields, where they had been at labor, immediately joined them. Their appearance, unhappily, had only the effect of renewing the battle. The Catholics, ignorant of the turn which the controversy had taken, supported Bob and Protestantism; whilst the Protestants, owing to a similar mistake, fought like devils for Darby and the Pope. A pretty smart skirmish, in fact, which lasted more than twenty minutes, took place between the parties, and were it not that their wives, sisters, daughters, and mothers, assisted by many who were more peaceably disposed, threw themselves between them, it might have been much more serious than it was. If the weapons of warfare ceased, however, so did not their tongues; there was abundance of rustic controversy exchanged between them, that is to say, polemical scurrility much of the same enlightened character as that in the preceding dialogue. The fact of the two parties, too, that came to their assistance, having mistaken the proper grounds of the quarrel, reduced Darby and Bob to the necessity of retracing their steps, and hoisting once more their new colors, otherwise their respective friends, had they discovered the blunder they had committed, would, unquestionably, have fought the battle a second time on its proper merits. Bob, escorted by his Catholic friends, who shouted and huzza'd as they went along, proceeded to Father M'Cabe's; whilst Darby and his adherents, following their example, went towards M'Clutchy's, and having left him within sight of Constitution Cottage, they returned to their labor.

We have already said, that neither M'Clutchy nor M'Slime was at all a favorite with Darby. Darby was naturally as avaricious, and griping, and oppressive as either of them; and as he was the principal instrument of their rapacity and extortion, he deemed it but fair and just that they should leave him at least a reasonable share of their iniquitous gains. They were not, however, the gentlemen to leave much behind them, and the upshot was, that Darby became not only highly dissatisfied at their conduct towards him, but jealous and vigilant of all their movements, and determined to watch an opportunity of getting them both into his power. M'Slime's trick about M'Clutchy's letter first awoke his suspicions, and the reader is already acquainted with the dexterous piece of piety by which he secured it. Both letters now were in his possession, or at least in a safe place; but as he had not yet read them, he did not exactly know what line of conduct or deportment to assume. Then, how face M'Clutchy without M'Slime's answer? Darby, however, was fertile, and precisely the kind of man who could, as they say, kill two birds with one stone. He had it;—just the very thing that would serve every purpose. Accordingly, instead of going to M'Clutchy's at all, he turned his steps to his own house; tied an old stocking around his head, got his face bandaged, and deliberately took to his bed in a very severe state of illness. And, indeed, to tell the truth, a day or two in bed was not calculated to do him the least harm, but a great deal of good; for what, between the united contributions of Father M'Cabe and Bob Beatty, he was by no means an unfit subject for the enjoyment of a few days' retirement from public life.

CHAPTER XIV.

Poll Doolin's Honesty, and Phil's Gallantry.—A Beautiful but Cowardly Method of Destroying Female Reputation.—A Domiciliary Visit from the Blood-hounds—Irresponsible Power.

At length the hour of Mary M'Loughlin's appointment with Phil arrived, and the poor girl found herself so completely divided between the contending principles of love for Harman and aversion towards Phil, that she scarcely knew the purport of her thoughts or actions. Harman's safety, however, was the predominant idea in her soul, and in order to effect that, or at least to leave nothing undone to effect it, she resolved, as pure and disinterested attachment always will do—to sacrifice her detestation for young M'Clutchy, so far as to give him an opportunity of satisfying her that he was sincere in wishing to save her lover. This setting aside her invincible and instinctive hatred of that worthy gentleman, was, she thought, not at least unreasonable, and with her mind thus regulated she accordingly awaited the appointed time. On reaching the back of her father's garden she found that Phil had not arrived, but somewhat to her relief she was accosted by Poll Doolin, who approached from a clump of trees that stood in deep and impenetrable shadow, whilst she and Poll were easily visible under the dim light of what is called a watery and cloudy moon.

Poll, as she addressed her, spoke eagerly,

and her voice trembled with what appeared to Mary to be deep and earnest agitation.

"Miss M'Loughlin," she exclaimed, in a low, but tremulous voice, "I now forgive your father all—I forgive him and his—you I need not forgive, for I never bore you ill-will—but I am bound to tell you that there's danger over your father's house and hearth this night. There is but one can save them, and he will. You must go into your own room, raise the window, and he will soon be there."

"What is that, Poll," said Mary, seriously alarmed, "I thought I heard the sound of low voices among the trees there. Who are they, or what is it?"

"Make haste," said Poll, leading the way, "go round to your room and come to the window. It's an awful business—there *is* people there in the clump—be quick, and when you come to the window raise it, and I'll tell you more through it."

Mary, in a state of great terror, felt that ignorant as she was of the dangers and difficulties by which she was surrounded, she had no other alternative than to be guided by Poll, who seemed to know the full extent of the mysterious circumstances to which she made such wild and startling allusions.

Poll immediately proceeded to Miss M'Loughlin's bed-room, the window of which was soon opened by Mary herself, who with trembling hands raised it no higher than merely to allow the necessary communication between them.

"You don't know, nor could you never suspect," said Poll, "the struggles that Misther Phil is makin' for you and yours. This night, maybe this hour, will show his friendship for your family. And now, Mary M'Loughlin, if you wish to have yourself and them safe—safe, I say, from his own father's blood-hounds," and this she hissed into her ear, squeezing her hand at the same time until it became painful—in a voice so low, earnest, and condensed, that it was scarcely in human nature to question the woman's sincerity; "if," she continued, "you wish to have them safe—and Harman safe, be guided by him, and let him manage it his own way. He will ask you to do nothing that is wrong or improper in itself; but as you love your own family—as you value Harman's life—let him act according to his own way, for he knows them he has to deal with best."

"Wo—wo—heavy and bitter betide you, Poll Doolin, if you are now deceiving me, or prompting me to do anything that is improper! I will not act in this business blindfold—neither I nor my family are conscious of evil, and I shall certainly acquaint them this moment with the danger that is over them."

"By the souls of the dead," replied Poll, uttering the oath in Irish, "if you do what you say there will be blood shed this night—the blood, too, of the nearest and dearest to you! Do not be mad, I say, do not be mad!"

"May God guide me?" exclaimed the distressed girl, bursting into tears; "for of myself I know not how to act."

"Be guided by Mr. Phil," said she; "he is the only man living that can prevent the damnable work that is designed against your family *this night.*"

She had scarcely uttered the words when Phil came breathless to the window, and, as if moved by a sense of alarm, and an apprehension of danger still greater than that expressed by Poll herself, he exclaimed—

"Miss M'Loughlin, it's no time for ceremony—*my* father's blood-hounds are at *your* father's door; and there is but one way of saving your family from violence and outrage. Excuse me—but I must pass in by this window. You don't know what I risk by it; but for your sake and theirs it must be done."

Even as he spake, the trampling of horses feet and the jingling of arms were distinctly heard at M'Loughlin's door—a circumstance which so completely paralyzed the distracted girl, that she became perfectly powerless with affright. Phil availed himself of the moment, put his hand to the window, which he raised up, and deliberately entered, after which he shut it down. Poll, while he did so, coughed aloud, as if giving a signal; and in an instant, a number of individuals mostly females, approached the window, near enough to see young M'Clutchy enter, and shut the window after him.

"Now" said Poll to the spectators, "I hope you're all satisfied; and you, James Harman, will believe your own eyes, if you don't Poll Doolin. Is that girl a fit wife for your cousin, do you think? Well, you're satisfied, are you? Go home now, and help forrid the match, if you can. You're a good witness of her conduct, at any rate."

"I did *not* believe you, Poll," replied the young man whom she addressed; "but unfortunately I am now satisfied, sure enough. My own eyes cannot deceive me. Lost and unhappy girl! what will become of her? But that's not all—for she has proved herself treacherous, and deceitful, and worthless."

"Ay," said the crones whom Poll had brought to witness what certainly seemed to them to be the innocent girl's shame and degradation—"ay," they observed, "there's now an end to her character, at any rate. The pride of the M'Loughlins has got a fall at last—and indeed they desarved it; for

they held their heads as upsettin' as if they were dacent Protestants, and them nothing but Papishes afther all."

"Go home, now," said Poll; "go home all of yez. You've seen enough, and too much. Throth I'm sorry for the girl, and did all I could to persuade her against the step she tuck; but it was no use—she was more like one that tuck love powdhers from him, than a raisonable bein'."

Harman's cousin had already departed, but in such a state of amazement, indignation, and disgust, that he felt himself incapable of continuing a conversation with any one, or of bestowing his attention upon any other topic whatsoever. He was thunderstruck—his very faculties were nearly paralyzed, and his whole mind literally clouded in one dark chaos of confusion and distress.

"Now," said Poll to the females who accompanied her—"go home every one of yez; but, for goodness sake don't be spakin' of what you seen this night. The poor girl's correcther's gone, sure enough; but for all that, let us have nothing to say to her or Mr. Phil. It'll all come out time enough, and more than time enough, without our help; so, as I said, hould a hard cheek about it. Indeed it's the safest way to do so—for the same M'Loughlins is a dangerous and bitther faction to make or meddle with. Go off now, in the name of goodness, and say nothin' to nobody—barring, indeed, to some one that won't carry it farther."

Whilst this dialogue, which did not occupy more than a couple of minutes, was proceeding, a scene of a different character took place in M'Loughlin's parlor, upon a topic which, at that period, was a very plausible pretext for much brutal outrage and violence on the part of the Orange yeomanry—we mean the possession, or the imputed possession, of fire-arms. Indeed the state of society in a great part of Ireland—shortly after the rebellion of ninety-eight—was then such as a modern conservative would blush for. An Orangeman, who may have happened to entertain a pique against a Roman Catholic, or sustained an injury from one, had nothing more to do than send abroad, or get some one to send abroad for him, a report that he had fire-arms in his possession. No sooner had this rumor spread, than a party of these yeomanry assembled in their regimentals, and with loaded fire-arms, proceeded, generally in the middle of the night or about day-break, to the residence of the suspected person. The door, if not immediately opened, was broken in—the whole house ransacked—the men frequently beaten severely, and the ears of females insulted by the coarsest and most indecent language. These scenes, which in nineteen cases out of twenty, the Orangemen got up to gratify private hatred and malignity, were very frequent, and may show us the danger of any government entrusting power, in whatever shape, or arms or ammunition, to irresponsible hands, or subjecting one party to the fierce passions and bigoted impulses of another.

The noise of their horses' feet as they approached M'Loughlin's house in a gallop, alarmed that family, who knew at once that it was a domiciliary visit from M'Clutchy's cavalry.

"Raise the window," said M'Loughlin himself, "and ask them what they want—or stay, open the door," he added at the same time to another, "and do not let us give them an excuse for breaking it in. It's the blood-hounds, sure enough," observed he, "and here they are."

In a moment they were dismounted, and having found the hall door open, the parlor was crowded with armed men, who manifested all the overbearing insolence and wanton insult of those who know that they can do so with impunity.

"Come, M'Loughlin," said Cochrane, now their leader, "you ribelly Papish rascal, produce your arms—for we have been informed that you have arms consaled in the house."

"Pray who informed you, Mr. Cochrane?"

"That's not your business, my man," replied Cochrane, "out with them before we search."

"I'll tell you what, Cochrane," replied M'Loughlin, "whoever informed you that we have arms is a liar—we have no arms."

"And right well they know that," said his son, "it's not for arms they come, but it's a good excuse to insult the family."

His father (who, on looking more closely at them, now perceived that they were tipsy, and some of them quite drunk) though a man of singular intrepidity, deemed it the wisest and safest course to speak to them as civilly as possible.

"I did'nt think, Tom Cochrane," said he, "that either I or any of my family, deserved such a visit as this from, I may say, my own door neighbors. It's not over civil, I think, to come in this manner, disturbing a quiet and inoffensive family."

"What's the ribelly rascal sayin'?" asked a drunken fellow, who lurched across the floor, and would have fallen, had he not come in contact with a chest of drawers, "what, wha-at's he say-ayin? but I sa-ay, here's to hell with the Po-po-pope—hurra!"

"Ah?" said young M'Loughlin, "you

have the ball at your own foot now, but if we were man to man, with equal weapons, there would be none of this swagger."

"What's tha-at the young rible says," said the drunken fellow, deliberately covering him with his cavalry pistol—"another word, and I'll let day-light through you."

"Come, Burke," said a man named Irwin, throwing up the muzzle of the pistol, "none o' this work, you drunken brute. Don't be alarmed, M'Loughlin, you shan't be injured."

"Go go to h—l, George, I'll do what I—I li-like; sure all these ribels ha-hate King William that sa-saved us from brass money a-and wooden noggins—eh, stay, shoes it is; no matter, they ought to be brogues I think, for it—it's brogues—ay, brogues, the papish—it is, by hell, 'brogues and broghans an' a' the Pa-papishes wear—that saved us from bra-brass money, an-and wooden brogues, that's it—for dam-damme if ever the Papishers was da-dacent enough to wear brass shoes, never, by jingo; so, boys, it's brass brogues—ay, do they ha-hate King William, that put us in the pil-pillory, the pillory in hell, and the devils pel-peltin' us with priests, —hurra boys, recov-er arms—stand at aise —ha—ram down Catholics—hurra!"

"Mr. M'Loughlin—"

"*Misther* M'Loughlin! ay, there's respect for a Pa-pish, an' from a purple man, too!"

"You had better be quiet, Burke," retorted Irwin, who was a determined and powerful man.

"For God's sake, gentlemen," said Mrs. M'Loughlin, "do not disturb or alarm our family—you are at liberty to search the house, but, as God is above us, we have no arms of any kind, and consequently there can be none in the house."

"Don't believe her," said Burke, "she's a Papish—" He had not time to add the offensive epithet, what ever it might have been, for Irwin—who, in truth, accompanied the party with the special intention of repressing outrage against the M'Loughlins, whom he very much respected—having caught him by the neck, shook the word back again, as it were, into his very throat.

"You ill-tongued drunken ruffian," said he, "if you don't hold your scoundrelly tongue, I'll pitch you head foremost out of the house. We must search, Mrs. M'Loughlin," said Irwin, "but it will be done as quietly as possible."

They then proceeded through all the rooms, into which, singular as it may appear, they scarcely looked, until they came into that in which we left Mary M'Loughlin and Phil. The moment this worthy gentleman heard their approach, he immediately shut the door, and, with all the seeming trepidation and anxiety of a man who feared discovery, bustled about, and made a show of preparing to resist their entrance. On coming to the door, therefore, they found it shut, and everything apparently silent within.

"Open the door," said Irwin, "we want to search for arms."

"Ah! boys," said Phil in a whisper through the key-hole, "pass on if you love me—I give you my word of honor that there's no arms here but a brace that is worth any money to be locked in."

"We must open, Mr. Phil," said Sharpe, "you know our ordhers. By Japurs," said he, in a side voice to the rest, "the fellow wasn't boastin' at all; it's true enough—I'll hould goold he was right, and that we'll find her inside with him."

"When I see it, I'll believe it," said Irwin, "but not till then. Open, sir," said he, "open, if all's right."

"Oh, d—n it, boys," said Phil again, "this is too bad—honor bright:—surely you wouldn't expose us, especially the girl." At the same time he withdrew his shoulder from the door, which flew open, and discovered him striving to soothe and console Miss M'Loughlin, who had not yet recovered her alarm and agitation, so as to understand the circumstances which took place about her. In fact, she had been in that description of excitement which, without taking away animation, leaves the female (for it is peculiar to the sex) utterly incapable of taking anything more than a vague cognizance of that which occurs before her eyes. The moment she and Phil were discovered together, not all Irwin's influence could prevent the party from indulging in a shout of triumph. This startled her, and was, indeed, the means of restoring her to perfect consciousness, and a full perception of her situation.

"What is this" she inquired, "and why is it that a peaceable house is filled with armed men? and you, Mr. M'Clutchy, for what treacherous purpose did you intrude into my private room?"

M'Loughlin himself, from a natural dread of collision between his sons and the licentious yeomanry, and trusting to the friendship and steadiness of Irwin, literally stood sentinel at the parlor door, and prevented them from accompanying the others in the search.

"My darling Mary," said Phil, "it's too late now, you see, to speak in this tone—we're caught, that's all, found out, and be cursed to these fellows. If they had found us anywhere else but in your bed-room, I didn't so much care; however, it can't be helped now."

As he spoke he raised his eye-brows from

time to time at his companions, and winked with an expression of triumph so cowardly and diabolical, that it is quite beyond our ability to describe it. They, in the meantime, winked and nodded in return, laughed heartily, and poked one another in the ribs.

"Bravo, Mr. Phil!—success, Captain!—more power to you!"

"Come now, boys," said Phil, "let us go. Mary, my darling, I must leave you; but we'll meet again where they can't disturb us—stand around me, boys, for, upon my honor and soul, these hot-headed fellows of brothers of hers will knock my brains out, if you don't guard me well; here, put me in the middle of you—good by, Mary, never mind this, we'll meet again."

However anxious M'Loughlin had been to prevent the possibility of angry words or blows between his sons and these men still the extraordinary yell which accompanied the discovery of young M'Clutchy in his daughter's bed-room, occasioned him to relax his vigilance, and rush to the spot, after having warned and urged them to remain where they were. Notwithstanding his remonstrances, they followed his footsteps, and the whole family, in fact, reached her door as Phil uttered the last words.

"Great God, what is this," exclaimed her father, "how came M'Clutchy, Val the Vulture's son, into my daughter's sleeping-room? How came you here, sir?" he added sternly, "explain it."

Not even a posse of eighteen armed men, standing in a circle about him, each with a cocked and loaded pistol in his hand, could prevent the cowardly and craven soul of him from quailing before the eye of her indignant father. His face became like a sheet of paper, perfectly bloodless, and his eye sank as if it were never again to look from the earth, or in the direction of the blessed light of heaven.

"Ah!" he proceeded, "you are, indeed, your treacherous, cowardly, and cruel father's son; you cannot raise your eye upon me, and neither could he. Mary," he proceeded, addressing his daughter, "how did this treacherous scoundrel get into your room? tell the truth—but that I need not add, for I know you will."

His daughter had been standing for some time in a posture that betrayed neither terror nor apprehension. Raised to her full height, she looked upon M'Clutchy and his men alternately, but principally upon himself, with a smile which in truth was fearful. Her eyes brightened into clear and perfect fire, the roundness of her beautiful arm was distended by the coming forth of its muscles—her lips became firm—her cheek heightened in color—and her temples were little less than scarlet. There she stood, a concentration of scorn, contempt, and hatred the most intense, pouring upon the dastardly villain an unbroken stream of withering fury, that was enough to drive back his cowardly soul into the deepest and blackest recesses of its own satanic baseness. Her father, in fact, was obliged to address her twice, before he could arrest her attention; for such was the measureless indignation which her eye poured upon him, that she could scarcely look upon any other object.

"My child, did you hear me?" said her father. "How did this heartless and down-looking scoundrel get into your apartment?"

She looked quickly upon her father's features—

"How?" said she; "how but by treachery, falsehood, and fraud! Is he not Val M'Clutchy's son, my dear father?"

Her brothers had not yet uttered a syllable, but stood like their sister with flushed cheeks and burning indignation in their eyes. On hearing what their sister had just said, however, as if they had all been moved by the same impulse, thought, or determination—as in truth they were—their countenances became pale as death—they looked at each other significantly—then at Phil—and they appeared very calm, as if relieved—satisfied; but the expression of the eye darkened into a meaning that was dreadful to look upon.

"That is enough, my child," replied her father; "I suppose, my friends, you are now satisfied——."

"Yes, by h—l," shouted Burke, "we are now satisfied."

Irwin had him again by the neck—"Silence," said he, "or, as heaven's above me, I'll drive your brainless skull in with the butt of my pistol."

"You are satisfied," continued M'Loughlin, "that there are no arms here. I hope you will now withdraw. As for you, treacherous and cowardly spawn of a treacherous and cowardly father, go home and tell him to do his worst—that I scorn and defy him—that I will live to see him——; but I am wrong—he is below our anger, and I will not waste words upon him."

"You will find you have used a thrifle too many for all that," said another of them; "when he hears them, you may be sure he'll put them in his pocket for you—as hear them he will."

"We don't care a d—n," said another, "what he does to blackguard Papishes, so long as he's a right good Orangeman, and a right good Protestant, too."

"Come now," said Irwin, "our duty is

over—let us start for home; we have no further business here."

"Won't you give us something to drink?" asked a new voice; "I think we desarve it for our civility. We neither broke doors nor furniture, nor stabbed either bed or bedclothes. We treated you well, and if you're dacent you'll treat us well."

"Confound him," said a fresh hand; "I'd not drink his cursed Papish whiskey. Sure the Papishes gets the priest to christen it for them. I wouldn't drink his cursed Papish whiskey."

"No, nor I," said several voices;—upon which a loud and angry dispute arose among them, as to whether it were consistent with true loyalty, and the duties of a staunch Protestant and Orangeman, to drink 'Papish liquor,' as they termed it, at all.

Irwin, who joined the negative party, insisted strongly that it would be disgraceful for any man who had drunk the glorious, pious, and immortal memory, ever to contaminate his loyal lips with whiskey that had been made a Papish of by the priest. This carried the argument, or otherwise it is hard to say what mischief might have arisen, had they heightened their previous intoxication.

Phil, during this dialogue, still retained his place in the centre of his friends; but from time to time he kept glancing from under his eyebrows at M'Loughlin and his sons, in that spaniel-like manner, which betrays a consciousness of offence and a dread of punishment.

Irwin now caused them to move off; and, indeed, scarcely anything could be more ludicrous than the utter prostration of all manly feeling upon the part of the chief offender. On separating, the same baleful and pallid glances were exchanged between the brothers, who clearly possessed an instinctive community of feeling upon the chief incident of the night—we mean that of finding M'Clutchy in their sister's bedroom. Irwin noticed their mute, motionless, but ghastly resentment, as did Phil himself, who, whether they looked at him or not, felt that their eyes were upon him, and that come what might, so long as he remained in the country he was marked as their victim. This consciousness of his deserts was not at all lessened by the observations of Irwin upon his conduct; for be it known, that although there subsisted a political bond that caused Phil and the violent spirits of the neighborhood to come frequently together, yet nothing could exceed the contempt which they felt for him in his private and individual capacity.

"Brother M'Clutchy," said Irwin, "I'm afraid you've made a bad night's work of it. By the moon above us, I wouldn't take the whole Castle Cumber property and stand in your shoes from this night out."

"Why so?" said Phil, who was now safe and beyond their immediate reach; "why so, Irwin? I'll tell you what, Irwin; d——n my honor, but I think you're cowardly. Did you see how steady I was to-night? Not a syllable escaped my lips; but, zounds, didn't you see how my eye told?"

"Faith, I certainly did, brother Phil, and a devilish bad tale it told, too, for yourself. Your father has promised me a new lease, with your life in it; but after this night, and after what I saw, I'll beg to have your name left out of *that* transaction."

"But didn't you see, George," returned Phil, "that a man of them durstn't look me in the face? They couldn't stand my eye; upon my honor they couldn't."

"Ay," said Burke, "that's because they're Papishes. A rascally Papish can never look a Protestant in the face."

"Well but," said Phil, "you would not believe that the girl was so fond of me as she is, until you saw it. I knew very well they had no arms; so, as I wished to give you an opportunity of judging for yourselves, I put the journey upon that footing."

"Well," said Irwin, "we shall see the upshot—that's all."

They then escorted Phil home, after which they dispersed.

When M'Loughlin's family assembled in the parlor, after their departure, a deep gloom brooded over them for some minutes. Mary herself was the first to introduce the incident which gave them so much distress, and in which she herself had been so painfully involved. She lost not a moment, therefore, in relating fully and candidly the whole nature of her intercourse with Poll Doolin, and the hopes held out to her of Harman's safety, through Phil M'Clutchy. At the same time, she expressed in forcible language, the sacrifice of feeling which it had cost her, and the invincible disgust with which she heard his very name alluded to. She then simply related the circumstance of his entering her room through the open window, and her belief, in consequence of the representations of Poll Doolin, that he did so out of his excessive anxiety to prevent bloodshed by the troopers—the trampling of whose horses' feet and the ringing of whose arms had so completely overpowered her with the apprehension of violence, that she became incapable of preventing M'Clutchy's entrance, or even of uttering a word for two or three minutes.

"However," said she, "I now see their design, which was to ruin my reputation, and

throw a stain upon my character and good name. So far, I fear, they have succeeded."

Tears then came to her relief, and she wept long and bitterly.

"Do not let it trouble you, my darling," said her father. "Your conscience and heart are innocent, and that is a satisfaction greater than anything can deprive you of. You were merely wrong in not letting us know the conversation that took place between Poll Doolin and you; because, although you did not know it, we could have told you that Poll is a woman that no modest female ought to speak to in a private way. There was your error, Mary; but the heart was right with you, and there's no one here going to blame you for a fault that you didn't know to be one."

Mary started on hearing this account of Poll Doolin, for she felt now that the interviews she held with her were calculated to heighten her disgrace, when taken in connection with the occurrence of the night. Her brothers, however, who knew her truth and many virtues, joined their parents in comforting and supporting her, but without the success which they could have wished. The more she thought of the toils and snares that had been laid for her, the more her perception of the calamity began to gain strength, and her mind to darken. She became restless, perplexed, and feverish—her tears ceased to flow—she sighed deeply, and seemed to sink into that most withering of maladies, dry grief, which, in her case, was certainly the tearless anguish of the heart. In this state she went to bed, conscious of her own purity, but by no means, in its full extent, of the ruined reputation to which she must awake on the succeeding day."

Mary's brothers, with the exception of the words in which they joined their father and mother in consoling her, scarcely uttered a syllable that night—the same silent spirit, be it of good or evil, remained upon them. They looked at each other, however, from time to time, and seemed to need no other interpreter of what passed within them, but their own wild and deep-meaning glances. This did not escape their father, who was so much struck, perhaps alarmed, by it, that he very properly deemed it his duty to remonstrate with them on the subject.

"Boys," said he, "I don't understand your conduct this night, and, above all, I don't understand your looks—or rather, I think I do, I'm afraid I do—but, listen to me, remember that revenge belongs to God. You know what the Scripture says, 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay it.' Leave that bad son of a worse father to God."

"He has destroyed Mary's reputation,' said John, the eldest; "I might, possibly, forgive him if he had killed her like a common murderer, but he has destroyed our pure-hearted sister's reputation, ha, ha, ha." The laugh that followed these last words came out so unexpectedly, abruptly, and wildly, that his father and mother both started. He then took the poker in his hands, and, with a smile at his brothers, in which much might be read, he clenched his teeth, and wound it round his arms with apparent ease. "If I got ten thousand pounds," said he, "I could not have done that two hours ago, but I can now—are you satisfied?" said he to his brothers.

"Yes, John," they replied, "we are satisfied—that will do."

"Yes," he proceeded, "I could forgive anything but that. The father's notice to us to quit the holding on which we and our forefathers lived so long, and expended so much money—and his refusal to grant us a lease, are nothing:—now we could forgive all that; but this, this—oh, I have no name for it—the language has not words to express it—but—well, well, no matter for the present. If the cowardly scoundrel would fight!—but he won't, for the courage is not in him."

CHAPTER XV.

Introduction of a New Character—Objects of an English Traveller—Correspondence between Ivory Easel, Esq., and Sam Spinageberd, Esq.—Susanna and the Elder; or, the Conventicle in Trouble—Phil's Gallantry and Courage.

It was about eleven o'clock the next day that a person in the garb of a gentleman, that is, the garb was a plain one enough, but the air of the person who wore it was evidently that of a man who had seen and mingled in respectable life, was travelling towards Spring Field, the residence of Mr. Hickman, when he overtook two females, one of whom was dressed in such a way as made it clear that she wished to avoid the risk of being known. She was a little above the middle size, and there could be little doubt, from the outline of her figure, that, in the opinion of unsuspicious people, she had reached the dignity of a matron. Her companion was dressed in faded black, from top to toe, and from the expression of her thin, sallow face, and piercing black eyes, there could be little doubt she had seen a good deal of the world as it exists in rustic life. The person who overtook these two females carried a portfolio, and appeared to observe the country

and its scenery, as he went along, with marked attention.

"Pray, ma'am," said he, "whose is that fine old building to the right, which appears to be going to ruin? It is evidently not inhabited."

"You're a stranger in the place, then," replied the female, "or you surely might know Castle Cumber House, where old Tom Topertoe used to live before the union came. He was made a lord of for sellin' our parliament, and now his son, the present lord, is leadin' a blessed life abroad, for he never shows his face here."

"He is an absentee, then?"

"To be sure he is, and so is every man of them now, barrin' an odd one. The country's deserted, and although business is lookin' up a little—take your time, Susanna, we needn't be in sich a hurry now—although, as I said, business is lookin' up a little, still it's nothing to what it was when the gentry lived at home wid us."

"Who is agent to this Lord Cumber, pray?"

"A blessed boy, by all accounts, but that's all I'll say about him—I know him too well to make him my enemy."

"Why, is he not popular—is he not liked by the tenantry?"

"Oh, Lord, to be sure—they doat upon him; and, indeed, no wondher, he's so kind and indulgent to the poor. To tell you the truth, he's a great blessin' to the country."

"That, to be sure, is very satisfactory—and, pray, if I may take the liberty, who is his law agent, or has he one?"

"Why, another blessed—hem—a very pious devout man, named Mr. Solomon M'Slime, an attorney—but, indeed, an attorney that almost shames the Bible itself, he's so religious. Isn't he, Susanna?"

"He hath good gifts; if he doth not abuse them."

"Religion is certainly the best principle in life, if sincerely felt, and not prostituted and made a mask of."

"A mask! isn't that, sir, a thing that people put on and off their face, according as it may suit them?"

"Just so, madam; you have exactly described it."

"Oh, the divil a mask ever he made of it, then, for he never lays it aside at all. He has kept it on so steadily, that, I'll take my oath, if he was to throw it off now, he wouldn't know himself in the looking-glass, it's so long since he got a glimpse of his own face."

"Lord Cumber must be a happy man to have two such valuable agents upon his property."

"Talkin' of Lord Cumber and his property, if you wish to know all about them, here's your man comin' over by the cross road here—he's goin' to M'Clutchy's I suppose, and, as you appear to be goin' in the same direction, I'll hand you over to him. Good morrow, Darby?"

"Good morrow, kindly, Poll, and—eh—who's this you've got wid you?" he continued, eyeing Susanna, "a stranger to me, any how. Well, Poll, and how are you?"

"There's no use in complainin', Darby; I'm middlin'—and how is yourself?"

"Throth, Poll, I've a lump in my stomach that I fear will settle me yet, if I don't get it removed somehow. But, sure, the hathens, I forgive them." In the meantime he slyly rubbed his nose and winked both eyes, as he looked towards Susanna, as much as to say, "I know all."

Poll, however, declined to notice the recognition, but renewed the discourse—

"Why, Darby, how did the lump come into your stomach? Faith, in these hard times, there's many a poor divel would be glad to have such a complaint—eh?"

"And, is it possible you didn't hear it?" he asked with surprise, "howandever, you shall. I was carrying a letther from Mr. M'Slime, that good, pious crature"—another shrewd look at Susanna, "Mr. M'Slime to Mr. M'Clutchy, another good gintleman, too, and who should attack me on the way but that turncoat hathen Bob Beatty, wid a whole posse of idolathers at his heels. They first abused me because I left them in their darkness, and then went to search me for writs, swearin' that they'd make me ait every writ I happened to have about me. Now, I didn't like to let Mr. M'Slime's letther fall into their hands, and, accordingly, I tore it up and swallowed it, jist in ordher to disappoint the hathens. Howandever, I'm sufferin' for it, but sure you know, Poll, it's our duty—I don't mane yours, for you're a hathen and idolather still—but mine; it's my duty to suffer for the thruth, anyhow."

Poll's laughter was loud and vehement on hearing these sentiments from a man she knew so well; but, to tell the truth, Darby, who felt that, in consequence of his last interview with Lucre, he was in for it, came to the resolution of doing it heavy, as they say, or, in other words, of going the whole hog.

"This appears to be a strange country," observed the traveller.

"Wait," said Poll, "till you come to know it, and you'll say that."

"No, but wait," observed Darby, "till *the spread* comes, and then you may say it."

"What do you mean by *the spread?*" asked the stranger.

"Why, the spread o' the gospel—of religion, to be shure," replied Darby; "and in this counthry," he added, "a glorious spread it is, the Lord be praised! Are you travellin far in this direction, sir, wid summission?"

"I am going as far as Springfield, the residence of a Mr. Hickman, to whom I have a letter of introduction. Do you know him?"

"He was an agent on this property," replied Darby; "but Mr. M'Clutchy came afther him; and, indeed, the tenants is mighty well satisfied wid the change. Hickman, sir, was next to a hathen—made no differ in life between an idolather and a loyal Protestant, but Mr. M'Clutchy, on the other hand, knows how to lean to his own, as he ought to do. And in regard o' that, I'd advise you when you see Mr. Hickman, jist to be on your guard as to what he may say about the Castle Cumber property, and them that's employed an it. Between you and me, he's not over scrupulous, and don't be surprised if he lays it hot and heavy on Mr. M'Clutchy and others, not forgettin' your humble sarvant, merely in regard of our honesty and loyalty, for I'm a staunch Protestant myself, glory be to God, and will support the Castle Cumber inthrest through thick and thin. Now, sir," he added, "there's two ways to Hickman's; and between you and me agin' Mr. Hickman is a real gentleman, exceptin' his little failings about M'Clutchy; but who is widout them? I dunna, but it would be as well if he had remained agent still; and when you see him, if you happen to say that Darby O'Drive tould you so, I think he'll understand you. Well—there's two ways, as I said, to this place—one by this road, that turns to the right—which, indeed, is the shortest—the other is by Constitution Cottage, which is M'Clutchy's place, where I am goin' to."

The stranger, after thanking Darby for his information, took the shorter road, and in about an hour or so reached Springfield.

It is not our intention to detail his interview with Mr. Hickman. For the present it is sufficient to say, that he produced to that gentleman a letter of introduction from Lord Cumber himself, who removed all mystery from about him, by stating that he was an English artist, who came over on a foolish professional tour, to see and take sketches of the country, as it appeared in its scenery, as well as in the features, character, and costume of its inhabitants. He had also introductions to M'Clutchy, M'Slime, Squire Deaker, M. Lucre, and several other prominent characters of the neighborhood.

As this gentleman amused himself by keeping an accurate and regular journal of all events connected with the Castle Cumber property, or which occurred on it, we feel exceedingly happy in being able to lay these important chronicles before our readers, satisfied as we are, that they will be valued, at least on the other side of the channel, exactly in proportion to the scanty opportunities he had of becoming acquainted with our language, manners, and character. The MS. is now before us, and the only privilege we reserve to ourselves is simply to give his dialogue an Irish turn, and to fill up an odd chasm here and there, occasioned by his ignorance of circumstances which have come to our knowledge through personal cognizance, and various other sources. The journal now in our possession is certainly the original one; but we know that copies of it were addressed successively, as the events occurred, to a gentleman in London, named Spinageberd, under cover to Lord Cumber himself, who kindly gave them the benefit of his frank, during the correspondence. Our friend, the journalist, as the reader will perceive, does not merely confine himself to severe facts, but gives us all the hints, inuendoes, and rumors of the day, both personal, religious and political. With these, our duty is simply to confirm or contradict them where we can, and where we cannot, to leave them just as we found them, resting upon their intrinsic claims to belief or otherwise. Having premised thus far, we beg leave to introduce to our reader's special acquaintance, Evory Easel, Esq., an English Artist and Savan, coming to *do* a portion of the country, ladies and gentleman, as has been often done before.

BATCH No. I.

Evory Easel, Esq., to Sam Spinageberd, Esq.

"OLD SPINAGEBERD:

"Here I am at last, in the land of fun and fighting—mirth and misery—orange and green. I would have written to you a month ago, but, that such a course was altogether out of my calculation. The moment I arrived, I came to the determination of sauntering quietly about, but confining myself to a certain locality, listening to, and treasuring up, whatever I could see or hear, without yet availing myself of Lord Cumber's introductions, in order that my first impressions of the country and the people, might result from personal observation, and not from the bias, which accounts heard here from either party, might be apt to produce. First, then, I can see the folly, not to say the injustice, which I ought to say, of a landlord placing his property under the management of a furious partisan, whose opinions, political and re-

ligious, are not merely at variance with, but totally opposed to, those whose interests are entrusted to his impartiality and honesty. In the management of a property circumstanced as that of Castle Cumber is, where the population is about one-half Roman Catholic, and the other half Protestant and Presbyterian, between us, any man, my dear Spinageberd, not a fool or knave, must see the madness of employing a fellow who avows himself an enemy to the creed of one portion of the tenantry, and a staunch supporter of their opponents. Is this fair, or can justice originate in its purity from such a source? Is it reasonable to suppose that a Roman Catholic tenantry, who, whatever they may bear, are impatient of any insult or injustice offered to their creed, or, which is the same thing, to themselves on account of that creed,—is it reasonable, I say, to suppose that such a people could rest satisfied with a man who acts towards them only through the medium of his fierce and ungovernable prejudices? Is it not absurd to imagine for one moment that property can be fairly administered through such hands, and, if not property, how much less justice itself. You may judge of my astonishment, as an Englishman, when I find that the administration of justice is in complete keeping with that of property; for, I find it an indisputable fact, that nineteen magistrates, out of every twenty, are Orangemen, or party men of some description, opposed to Roman Catholic principles. And, yet, the Roman Catholic party are expected to exhibit attachment to the government which not merely deprives them of their civil rights, but literally places the execution of the laws in the hands of their worst and bitterest enemies. I say so deliberately; for I find that nothing so strongly recommends a man to the office of magistrate, or, indeed, to any office under government, as the circumstance of being a strong, conspicuous anti-Catholic. In writing to you, my dear Spinageberd, you may rest assured that I will give expression to nothing but truths which are too well known to be contradicted. The subject of property in Ireland, is one, which, inasmuch as it is surrounded with great difficulties, is also entitled to great consideration.

"If there be any one prejudice in the character of an Irish peasant stronger or more dangerous than another—and he has many, they say, that are both strong and dangerous—it is that which relates to property and the possession of it. This prejudice is, indeed, so conscious of its own strength, and imbued in this opinion with so deep a conviction of its justice, that, in ordinary circumstances, it scorns the aid of all collateral and subordinate principles, and even flings religion aside, as an unnecessary ally. Injustice, therefore, or oppression, or partiality in the administration of property, constitutes the greatest crime known to the agrarian law, and is consequently resisted by the most unmitigable and remorseless punishment. The peasant who feels, or believes himself to be treated with injustice, or cruelty, never pauses to reflect upon the religion of the man whom he looks upon as his oppressor. He will shoot a Catholic landlord or agent from behind a hedge, with as much good will as he would a Protestant. Indeed, in general, he will prefer a Protestant landlord to those of his own creed, knowing well, as he does, that the latter, where they are possessed of property, constitute the very worst class of landlords in the kingdom. As religion, therefore, is not at all necessarily mixed up with the Irishman's prejudices on this subject—it is consequently both dangerous and wicked to force it to an adhesion with so dreadful a principle as that which resorts to noon-day or midnight murder. This is unfortunately what such fellows as this M'Clutchy do. They find the Irish peasant with but one formidable prejudice in relation to property, and by a course of neglect, oppression, and rapacity, joined to all the malignant rancor of religious bigotry, and party feeling, they leave him goaded by a hundred. I believe in my soul that there are many fire-brands like M'Clutchy in this country, who create the crime, in order to have the gratification of punishing it, and of wreaking a legal vengeance upon the unfortunate being who has been guilty of it, in order that they may recommend themselves as loyal men to the government of the day. If this be so, how can the country be peaceable? If it be peaceable, such men can have no opportunity of testing their loyalty, and if they do not test their loyalty, they can have no claim upon the government, and having no claim upon the government, they will get nothing from it. The day will come, I hope, when the very existence of men like these, and of the system which encouraged them, will be looked upon with disgust and wonder—when the government of our country will make no invidious distinctions of creed or party, and will not base the administration of its principles upon the encouragement of hatred between man and man.

"Hickman, the former agent, was the first to whom I presented Lord Cumber's letter. He is a gentleman by birth, education, and property; a man of a large and a liberal mind, well stored with information, and has the character of being highly, if not punctiliously honorable. His age is about

fifty-five, but owing to his regular and temperate habits of life, and in this country temperance is a virtue indeed, he scarcely looks beyond forty. Indeed, I may observe by the way, that in this blessed year of ——, the after-dinner indulgences of the Irish squirearchy, who are the only class that remain in the country, resemble the drunken orgies of Silenus and his satyrs, more than anything else to which I can compare them. The conversation is in general licentious, and the drinking beastly; and I don't know after all, but the Irish are greater losers by their example than they would be by their absence.

"On making inquiries into the state and management of this property, I found Hickman actuated by that fine spirit of gentlemanly delicacy, which every one, rich and poor, attribute to him. M'Clutchy having succeeded him, he very politely declined to enter into the subject at any length, but told me that I could be at no loss in receiving authentic information on a subject so much and so painfully canvassed. I find it is a custom in this country for agents to lend money to their employers, especially when they happen to be in a state of considerable embarrassment, by which means the unfortunate landlord is seldom able to discharge or change his agent, should he misconduct himself; and is consequently saddled with a vampire probably for life, or while there is any blood to be got out of him. Hickman, who has other agencies, makes it a point of principle, never to lend money to a landlord, by which means he avoids those imputations which are so frequently and justly brought against those who trade upon the embarrassments of their employers, in order to get them into their power.

"May 13.—There are two newspapers in the town of Castle Cumber, conducted upon opposite principles: one of them is called *The Castle Cumber True Blue*, and is the organ of the Orange Tory party, and the High Church portion of the Establishment. The other advocates the cause of the Presbyterians, Dissenters, and gives an occasional lift to the Catholics. There is also a small party here, which, however, is gaining ground every day, called the Evangelical, an epithet adopted for the purpose of distinguishing them from the mere worldly and political High Churchmen, who, together with all the loyalty and wealth, have certainly all the indifference to religion, and most of the secular and ecclesiastical corruptions that have disgraced the Church, and left it little better than a large mass of bribes in the hands of the English minister. In such a state of things, you may judge how that rare grace, piety, is rewarded. There is, besides, no such thing to be found in this country as an Irish bishop, nor, is a bishop ever appointed for his learning or his piety; on the contrary, the unerring principle of their elevation to the mitre, is either political, or family influence, or both. I wish I could stop here, but I cannot; there are, unfortunately, still more flagitious motives for their appointment. English ministers have been found, who were so strongly influenced by respect for the religion and Church Establishment of the Irish, that they have not blushed to promote men, who were the convenient instruments of their own profligacy, to some of the richest sees in the kingdom. But I am travelling out of my record; so to return. The name of the second paper is the *Genuine Patriot, and Castle Cumber Equivocal;* this last journal is, indeed, sorely distressed between the Catholic and Evangelical parties. The fact is, that the Evangelicals entertain such a horror of Popery, as a spiritual abomination, that they feel highly offended that *their* advocates should also be the advocate of Old Broadbottom, as the Orangemen call the Pope; in consequence, they say, of his sitting upon seven hills. The editors of these papers are too decidedly opposed in general, to be on bad terms with each other; or, to speak more intelligibly, they are not on the same side, and consequently do not hate each other as they ought and would. The town of Castle Cumber, like every other country town, is one mass of active and incessant scandal; and, it not unfrequently happens that the *True Blue* will generously defend an individual on the opposite side, and the *Genuine Patriot* fight for a High Churchman. The whole secret of this, however is, that it is the High Churchman who writes in the *Patriot*, and the Evangelical in the *True Blue*, each well knowing that a defence by an opposing paper is worth more than one by his favorite organ. In the instance I am about to specify, however, the case was otherwise, each paper adhering to the individual of his own principles. On taking up the *True Blue* I read the following passage, to which I have fortunately obtained a key that will make the whole matter quite intelligible. The article was headed:—

"*Susanna and the Elder; or the Conventicle in trouble.*

"'For some time past we regret, sincerely regret, as Christian men, that a rumor has, by degrees, been creeping into circulation, which we trust is, like most rumors of the kind, without foundation. The reputation of a very pious professional gentleman, well

known for his zeal and activity in the religious world, is said to be involved in it, but, we trust, untruly. The gentleman in question, has, we know, many enemies; and we would fain hope, that this is merely some evil device fabricated by the adversaries of piety and religion. The circumstances alluded to are briefly these: Susanna, says the evil tongue of rumor, was a religious young person, residing in the character of children's maid in the family. She was of decided piety, and never known to be absent from morning and evening worship; it seems, besides, that she is young, comely, and very agreeable, indeed, to the mere, secular eye. Her symmetry had been remarkable, but indeed female graces are seldom long lived; she is not now, it seems, in the respectable gentleman's family alluded to, and her friends are anxious to see her, but cannot. So the idle story goes, but we hesitate not to say that it originates in the vindictive malice of some concealed enemy, who envies the gentleman in question his pure and unsullied reputation. We would not ourselves advert to it at all, but that we hope it may meet his eye, and prompt him to take the earliest measures to contradict and refute it, as we are certain he will and can do.'

"This was all exceedingly kind, and certainly so very charitable that the Equivocal could not, with any claim to Christian principles, suffer itself to be outdone in that blessed spirit of brotherly love and forgiveness, which, it trusted, always characterized its pages.

"'We are delighted,' it said, 'at the mild and benevolent tone in which, under the common misconception, a little anecdote, simple and harmless in itself, was uttered. Indeed, we smiled—but we trust the smile was that of a Christian—on hearing our respected and respectable contemporary doling out the mistake of a child, with such an air of solemn interest in the reputation of a gentleman whose name and character are beyond the reach of either calumny or envy. The harmless misconception on which, by a chance expression, the silly rumor was founded, is known to all the friends of the gentleman in question. He himself, however, being one of those deep-feeling Christians, who are not insensible to the means which are often resorted to, for wise purposes, in order to try us and prove our faith, is far from looking on the mistake—as, in the weakness of their own strength, many would do—as a thing to be despised and contemned. No; he receives it as a warning, it may be, for him to be more preciously alive to his privileges, and to take care when he stands lest he might fall. Altogether, therefore, he receives this thing as an evidence that he is cared for, and that it is his duty to look upon it as an awakening of his, perhaps, too worldly and forgetful spirit, to higher and better duties; and if so, then will it prove a blessing unto him, and will not have been given in vain. We would not, therefore, be outdone even in charity by our good friend of the True Blue; and we remember that when about six months ago, he was said to have been found in a state scarcely compatible with sobriety, in the channel of Castle Cumber main street, opposite the office door of the Equivocal, on his way home from an Orange lodge, we not only aided him, as was our duty, but we placed the circumstance in its proper light—a mere giddiness in the head, accompanied by a total prostration of physical strength, to both of which even the most temperate, and sober, are *occasionally* liable. The defect of speech, accompanied by a strong tendency to lethargy, we accounted for at the time, by a transient cessation or paralysis of the tongue, and a congestion of blood on the brain, all of which frequently attack persons of the soberest habits. Others might have said it was intoxication, or drunkenness, and so might his character have been injured; but when his incapacity to stand was placed upon its proper footing, the matter was made perfectly clear, and there was, consequently, no doubt about it. So easy is it to distort a circumstance, that is harmless and indifferent in itself, into a grievous fault, especially where there is not Christian charity to throw a cloak over it.'

"Such is a specimen of two paragraphs—one from each paper; and considering that the subject was a delicate one, and involving the character of a professor, we think it was as delicately handled on both sides as possible. I am told it is to be publicly alluded to to-morrow in the congregation of which the subject of it, a Mr. Solomon M'Slime, an attorney, is an elder—a circumstance which plainly accounts for the heading of the paragraph in the True Blue.

"'There were, however, about a week or ten days ago, a couple of paragraphs in the True Blue—which, by the way, is Mr. M'Clutchy's favorite paper—of a very painful description. There is a highly respectable man here, named M'Loughlin—and you will please to observe, my dear Spinageberd, that this M'Loughlin is respected and well spoken of by every class and party; remember that, I say. This man is a partner with a young fellow named Harman, who is also very popular with parties. Harman, it seems, was present at some scene up in the mountains, where M'Clutchy's blood-hounds, as they are called,

from their ferocity when on duty, had gone to take a man suspected for murder. At all events, one of the blood-hounds in the struggle—for they were all armed, as they usually are—lost his life by the discharge—said to be accidental, but sworn to be otherwise, before Mr. Magistrate M'Clutchy—of a loaded carbine. He was to have been tried at the assizes which have just terminated; but his trial has been postponed until the next assizes, it is said for want of sufficient evidence. Be this as it may, it seems that M'Loughlin's beautiful daughter was soon to have been married to her father's young partner, now in prison. The unfortunate girl, however, manifested the frailty of her sex: for while her former lover was led to suppose that he possessed all the fulness of her affection, she was literally carrying on a private and guilty intrigue with one of the worst looking scoundrels that ever disgraced humanity—I mean Phil, as he is called, only son to Valentine M'Clutchy—who, by the way, goes among the people under the sobriquet of Val the Vulture. I need not say what the effects of this young woman's dishonor have produced upon her family. Young M'Clutchy was seen by several to go into her own apartment, and was actually found striving to conceal himself there by his father's blood-hounds who had received information that M'Loughlin had fire-arms in his house. The consequence is, that the girl's reputation is gone for ever. 'Tis true the verdict against her is not unanimous. There is a woman, named Poll Doolin, mentioned, who bears a most unrelenting enmity against M'Loughlin and his family, for having transported one of her sons. She is said to have been the go-between on this occasion, and that the whole thing is a cowardly and diabolical plot between this Phil—whom the girl, it seems, refused to marry before—and herself. I don't know how this may be; but the damning fact of this ugly scoundrel having been seen to go into her room, with her own consent, and being found there, attempting to conceal himself, by his father's cavalry, overweighs, in my opinion, anything that can be said in her favor. As it is, the family are to be pitied, and she herself, it seems, is confined to her bed with either nervous or brain fever, I don't know which—but the disclosure of the intrigue has had such an effect upon her mind, that it is scarcely thought she will recover it. Every one who knew her is astonished at it; and what adds to the distress of her and her family is, that Harman, whose cousin was an eye-witness to the fact of her receiving Phil into her chamber, has written both to her and them, stating that he is aware of her perfidy, and that henceforth he renounces her for ever.

There have also been strong rumors touching the insolvency of the firm of M'Loughlin and Harman, and, it is to be feared, that this untoward exposure will injure them, even in a worldly point of view. In the True Blue there are two paragraphs of the following stamp—paragraphs that certainly deserve to get the ears of those who either wrote or published them cropped off their heads.

"Unprecedented Feat of Gallantry and Courage!

"Public rumor has already exonerated us from the delicacy which would otherwise have restrained our pen from alluding to a feat of gallantry and courage performed by a young gentleman who does not live a hundred miles from Constitution Cottage. It seems that a *laison* once subsisted between him and a young lady of great personal attractions, and, at that time, supposed (erroneously) to be entitled to a handsome dowry, considering that the fair creature worships at the Mallet Office, and bestows, in the exercise of her usual devotion, some soft blows upon her fair, but not insensible bosom. Our readers will understand us. The young gentleman in question, however, hearing that the lady had been recently betrothed to a partner of her father's, prompted by that spirit of gallant mischief or dare-devilism for which he is so remarkable, did, under very dangerous circumstances, actually renew his intimacy, and had several stolen, and, consequently, sweet meetings with the charming creature. This, however, reached his father's ears, who, on proper information, despatched a troop of his own cavalry to bring the young gentleman home—and so accurate was the intelligence received, that, on reaching her father's house, they went directly to the young lady's chamber, from which they led out the object of their search, after several vain but resolute attempts to exclude them from his bower of love. This unfortunate discovery has occasioned a great deal of embarrassment in the family, and broken up the lady's intended marriage with her father's partner. But what strikes us, is the daring courage of the hero who thus gallantly risked life and limb, rather than that the lady of his love should pine in vain. Except Leander's, of old, we know of no such feat of love and gallantry in these degenerate days.'

"This other is equally malignant and vindictive.

"'*Messrs. Harman and M'Loughlin.*

"'We shall be very happy, indeed exceedingly so, to contradict an unpleasing rumor, affecting the solvency of our respected fellow-townsmen, Messrs. Harman and M'Loughlin. We do not ourselves give any credit to such rumors; but how strange, by the way, that such an expression should drop from our pen on such a subject? No, we believe them to be perfectly solvent; or, if we err in supposing so, we certainly err in the company of those on whose opinions, we, in general, are disposed to rely. We are inclined to believe, and we think, that for the credit of so respectable a firm, it is our duty to state it, that the rumor affecting their solvency has been mistaken for another of an almost equally painful character connected with domestic life, which, by the unhappy attachment of * * * * * * to a young gentleman of a different creed and proverbially loyal principles, has thrown the whole family into confusion and distress.'

"These, my dear Spinageberd, are the two paragraphs, literally transcribed, from the True Blue, and I do not think it necessary to add any comment to them. On to-morrow I have resolved to attend the Dissenting Chapel, a place of worship where I have never yet been, and I am anxious, at all events, to see what the distinctions are between their mode of worship and that of the Church of Englandism. Besides, to admit the truth, I am also anxious to see how this Solomon—this religious attorney, whose person I well know—will deport himself under circumstances which assuredly would test the firmness of most men, unless strongly and graciously sustained, as they say themselves."

CHAPTER XVI.

Solomon in Trouble—Is Publicly Prayed for—His Gracious Deliverance, and Triumph—An Orangeman's View of Protestantism and of Popery—Phil's Discretion and Valor.

"MONDAY, half-past eleven o'clock.

"MY DEAR SPINAGEBERD:

"In pursuance of my intention, I attended the Castle Cumber Meeting-house yesterday, and must confess that I very much admire the earnest and unassuming simplicity of the dissenting ritual. They have neither the epileptical rant nor goatish impulses of the Methodists, nor the drowsy uniformity from which not all the solemn beauty of the service can redeem the Liturgy of the Church of England. In singing, the whole congregation generally take a part—a circumstance which, however it may impress their worship with a proof of sincerity, certainly adds nothing to its melody.

"The paragraph of 'Susanna and the Elder' having taken wind, little Solomon, as they call him, attended his usual seat, with a most unusual manifestation of grace and unction beaming from his countenance. He was there early; and before the service commenced he sat with his hands locked in each other, their palms up, as was natural, but his eyes cast down, in peaceful self-communion, as was evident from the divine and ecstatic smile with which, from time to time, he cast up his enraptured eyes to heaven, and sighed—sighed with an excess of happiness which was vouchsafed to but few, or, perhaps, for those depraved and uncharitable sinners who had sent abroad such an ungodly scandal against a champion of the faith. At all events, at the commencement of the service, the minister—a rather jolly-looking man, with a good round belly apparently well lined—read out of a written paper, the following short address to those present:—

"'The prayers of this congregation are requested for one of its most active and useful members, who is an elder thereof. They are requested to enable him to fight the good fight, under the sore trials of a wicked world which have come upon him in the shape of scandal. But inasmuch as these dispensations are dealt out to us often for our soul's good and ultimate comfort, the individual in question doth not wish you to pray for a cessation of this, he trusts, benign punishment. He receives it as a token—a manifestation that out of the great congregation of the faithful that inherit the church, he—an erring individual—a frail unit, is not neglected nor his spiritual concerns overlooked. He therefore doth not wish you to say, "cease Lord, this evil unto this man," but yea, rather to beseech, that if it be for his good, it may be multiplied unto him, and that he may feel it is good for him to be afflicted. Pray, therefore, that he may be purged by this tribulation, and that like those who were placed in the furnace, nine times heated, he may come out without a hair of his head singed—unhurt and rejoicing, ready again to fight the good fight, with much shouting, the rattling of chariots, and the noise of triumph and victory.'

"During the perusal of this all eyes were turned upon Solomon, whose face was now perfectly seraphic, and his soul wrapped up into the ninth heaven. Of those around him it was quite clear that he was altogether incognizant. His eyelids were down as before, but the smile on his face now was a perfect

glory; it was unbroken, and the upturning of the eyes proceeded from, and could be, nothing less than a glimpse of that happiness which no other eye ever had seen but that of Solomon's at that moment, and which, it was equally certain, no heart but his could conceive. When it was concluded the psalm commenced, and if there had been any doubt before, there could be none now that his triumph was great, and the victory over the world and his enemies obtained, whilst a fresh accession of grace was added to that which had been vouchsafed him before. He led the psalm now with a fervor of spirit and fulness of lung which had never been heard in the chapel before; nay, he moved both head and foot to the time, as if he had only to wish it, and he could ascend at once to heaven. This, indeed, was a victory, this was a moment of rejoicing—here was the Christian soldier rattling home in his triumphal chariot, to the sound of the trumpet, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer.

"When the service was over he shook hands with as many of his friends as he could, exclaiming, 'oh, what a blessed day has this been to me! what a time of rejoicing; indeed it is good to be tried. Truly the sources of comfort were opened to my soul on this day more abundantly than I dared to hope for—I feel my privileges more strongly, and more of the new man within me—I am sustained and comforted, and feel that it was good for me to be here this day—I did not hope for this, but it was graciously granted to me, notwithstanding. How good, how heavenly a thing it is to be called upon to suffer, especially when we are able to do so in faith and obedience. May He be praised for all. Amen! Amen!'

"Now, my dear friend, who will say, after all this, that the stage is the great school for actors? who ever saw on the boards of a theatre a more finished performance than that of Solomon M'Slime? It so happens that I am acquainted with the whole circumstances, and, consequently, can fully appreciate his talents. In the mean time I am paying a visit of business to M'Clutchy to-morrow, that I may have an opportunity of a nearer inspection into his character. He is said to be an able, deep, vindictive, and rapacious man—cowardly, but cruel—treacherous, but plausible; and without the slightest remorse of conscience to restrain him from the accomplishment of any purpose, no matter how flagitious. And, yet, the cure for all this, in the eyes of his own party, is his boundless loyalty, and his thorough Protestantism. No wonder the church should be no longer useful or respected when she is supported only by such Protestants as Valentine M'Clutchy, and his class.

"Thursday.—At a little after ten, I waited upon this famous agent to the Castle Cumber property, and found him in his office, looking over an account-book with his son. He had a bad face—black, heavy, over-hanging eyebrows, and an upper lip that quivers and gets pale when engaged even in earnest conversation—his forehead is low, but broad and massive, indicating the minor accessories of intellect, together with great acuteness and cunning; altogether he had the head and face of a felon. For purposes which you shall know hereafter, I declined presenting Lord Cumber's letter of introduction, which I calculated would put the fellow on his guard, deeming it more prudent to introduce myself as a stranger, anxious, if I could do so conveniently, to settle somewhere in the neighborhood. The son's back was towards me when I entered, and until he had finished the account at which he had been engaged, which he did by a good deal of altering and erasing, he did not deem it worth while to look about him even at the entrance of a stranger. Having heard me express my intention of looking for a residence in the vicinity, he did me the honor of one of the most comical stares I ever saw. He is a tall fellow, about six feet, his shoulders are narrow, but round as the curve of a pot—his neck is, at least, eighteen inches in length, on the top of which stands a head, somewhat of a three-cornered shape, like a country barber's wig block, only not so intelligent looking. His nose is short, and turned up a little at the top—his squint is awful, but then, it is peculiar to himself; for his eyes, instead of looking around them as such eyes do, appear to keep a jealous and vigilant watch of each other across his nose—his chin is short and retreating, and from his wide mouth project two immeasurable buck teeth, that lie together like a pair of tiles upon a dog kennel. Heavens! that a beautiful girl—as it is said everywhere Miss M'Loughlin is, and until now proverbially correct in her conduct and deportment—should admit such a misshapen kraken as this into her apartment, and at night, too! After having stared at me for some time with a great deal of cunning and a great deal of folly in his countenance, he again began to pore over the blank pages of his book, as if he had been working out some difficult calculation.

"'And,' said the father, after we had been chatting for some time, 'have you seen anything in the neighborhood that you think would suit you?'

"'I am too much of a stranger, sir,' I replied, 'to be able to answer in the affirmative—but I admire the country and the scenery, both of which in this immediate neigh-

borhood, are extremely beautiful and interesting.'

"'They are so,' he replied, 'and the country is a fine one, certainly.'

"'Ay,' said Phil, 'only for these cursed Papists.'

"As he spoke he looked at me very significantly, and drew three of his yellow fingers across his chin, but added nothing more. This, by the way, he did half a dozen times, and, on mentioning the circumstance, it has been suggested to me that it must have been the sign by which one Orangeman makes himself known to another.

"'The Papists,' I replied, 'do not enter into any objection of mine against a residence in the neighborhood; but, as you, Mr. M'Clutchy, as agent of this fine property, must be well acquainted with the state and circumstances of the country, you would really confer a favor by enabling me, as a stranger, to form correct impressions of the place and people.'

"'Then,' said he, 'in the first place allow me to ask what are your politics? As an Englishman, which I perceive you are by your accent—I take it for granted that you are a Protestant.'

"'I am a Protestant, certainly,' I replied, 'and a Church of England one.'

"'Ay, but that's not enough,' said Phil, 'that won't do, my good sir; d—n my honor if it would be worth a fig in this country.'

"'I am very ignorant of Irish politics, I admit,' said I, 'but, I trust, I am in good hands for the receipt of sound information on the subject.'

"'No, no,' continued Phil, 'that's nothing—to be a mere Church of England man, or a Church of Ireland man either, would never do here, I tell you. Upon my honor, but that's doctrine.'

"'Well, but what *would* do,' I inquired; for I certainly felt a good deal of curiosity to know what he was coming to.

"'The great principle here,' said the son, 'is to hate and keep down the Papists, and you can't do that properly unless you're an Orangeman. Hate and keep down the Papists, that's the true religion, I pledge you my honor and reputation it is.'

"'You put the principle too strong, and rather naked, Phil,' observed the father; 'but the truth is, sir,' he added, turning to me, 'that you may perceive that fine spirit of Protestant enthusiasm in the young man, which is just now so much wanted in, and so beneficial to the country and the government. We must, sir, make allowance for this in the high-spirited and young, and ardent; but, still, after deducting a little for zeal and enthusiasm, he has expressed nothing but truth—with the exception, indeed, that we are not bound to hate them, Phil; on the contrary, we are bound to love our enemies.'

"'Begging your pardon, father, I say we are bound to hate them.'

"'Why, so, sir, may I ask,' said I.

"'Why so—why because—because—they—because as—aren't they Papists, and is not that sufficient—and, again, here's another reason still stronger, aren't we Orangemen? Now, sir, did you, or any one, even hear of such a thing as a good, sound Orangeman loving a Papist—a bloody Papist. My word and honor, but that's good!'

"'The truth is,' said the father, 'that the turbulence of their principles has the country almost ripe for insurrection. I have myself received above half a dozen notices, and my son there, as many; some threatening life, others property, and I suppose the result will be, that I must reside for safety in the metropolis. My house is this moment in a state of barricade—look at my windows, literally checkered with stancheon bars—and, as for arms, let me see, we have six blunderbusses, eight cases of pistols, four muskets, two carbines, with a variety of side arms, amounting to a couple of dozen. Such, sir, is the state of the country, owing, certainly, as my son says, to the spirit of Popery, and to the fact of my discharging my duty towards Lord Cumber with fidelity and firmness.'

"'In that case,' I observed, 'there is little to induce any man possessing some property to reside here.'

"'Certainly nothing,' he replied, 'but a great many inducements to get out of it.'

"'Does Lord Cumber ever visit his property here?' I asked.

"'He has too much sense,' returned the agent; 'but now that parliament is dissolved, he will come over to the Election. We must return either him or his brother the Hon. Dick Topertoe, who, I understand, has no fixed principles whatsoever.'

"'But why return such a man? Why not put up and support one of your own way of thinking?'

"'Why, because in the first place, we must keep out Hartley, who is a liberal, and also an advocate for emancipating Popery; and, in the second, if it be bad to have no principles, like Topertoe, it is worse to have bad ones like Hartley. He'll do to stop a gap until we get better, and then unless he comes round, we'll send him adrift.'

"'Is he in Ireland? I mean does he reside in the country?'

"'Not he, sir; it seems he's a wayward devil, very different from the rest of the family—and with none of the dash and spirit of the Topertoe blood in him.'

"'In that case, he will be no great loss; but Mr. M'Clutchy, notwithstanding all you have said I am so much charmed with the beauty of the country, that I would gladly settle in the neighborhood, if I could procure a suitable residence, together with a good large farm, which I would rent. Is there anything in that way vacant on the estate?'

"'At present, sir, nothing; but it is possible there may be, and if you should remain in the country, I shall feel great pleasure in acquainting you.'

"'Because I was told,' I continued, 'that there are two large farms, either of which would suit me admirably; but I dare say I have been misinformed. I allude to Mr. M'Loughlin's and Harman's holdings, which I understand are out of lease.'

"'Yes,' said he, sighing, 'I am sorry for those men; but the truth is, my good sir, that in this affair I am not a free agent. Lord Cumber, in consequence of some very accurate information that reached him, has determined to put them out of their holdings, now that their leases have expired. I am, you know, but his agent, and cannot set up my will against his.'

"'But could you not take their part?—could you not remonstrate with him, and set him right, rather than see injustice done to innocent men?'

"'You surely cannot imagine, sir, that I have not done so. Earnestly, indeed, have I begged of him to reconsider his orders, and to withdraw them; but like all the Topertoes, he is as obstinate as a mule. The consequence is, however, that whilst the whole blame of the transaction is really his, the odium will fall upon me, as it always does.'

"Here Phil, the son, who had been for the last few minutes paring away the pen with his knife, gave a sudden yelp, not unlike what a hound would utter when he gets an unexpected cut of the whip. It was certainly meant for a laugh, as I could perceive by the frightful grin which drew back his lips from his yellow projecting tusks, as his face appeared to me in the looking-glass—a fact which he seemed to forget.

"'Then, Mr. M'Clutchy, the farms of these men, are they disposed of?'

"'They are disposed of; and, indeed, in any event, I could not, in justice to the landlord's interests, receive the offers which M'Loughlin and Harman made me. My son here, who, as under agent feels it necessary to reside on the property, and who is about to take unto himself a wife besides, has made me a very liberal offer for M'Loughlin's holding—one, indeed, which I did not feel myself at liberty to refuse. Mr. M'Slime, our respected law agent, I also considered a very proper tenant for Harman's; and that matter is also closed—by which means I secured two respectable, safe, and unobjectionable tenants, on whose votes, at all events, we can reckon, which was more than we could do with the other two—both of whom had expressed their determination to vote in favor of Hartley.'

"'What are the religious opinions of those men, Mr. M'Clutchy?'

"'M'Loughlin is a Papist——'

"'But Harman is worse,' interrupted Phil; 'for he's a Protestant, and no Orangeman.'

"'I thought,' I replied, 'that nothing could be so bad as a Papist, much less worse.'

"'Oh yes,' said Phil, 'that's worse; because one always knows that a Papist's a Papist—but when you find a Protestant who is not an Orangeman, on my sacred honor, you don't know what to make of him. The Papists are all cowards, too.'

"'Then,' said I, 'you have the less difficulty in keeping them down.'

"'Upon my soul and honor, sir, you don't know how a naked Papist will run from a gun and bayonet. I have often seen it.'

"At this moment a tap came to the door, and a servant man, in Orange livery, announced a gentleman to see Mr. Philip M'Clutchy. I rose to take my departure; but Phil insisted I should stop.

"'Don't go, sir,' said he; 'I have something to propose to you by and by.' I accordingly took my seat.

"When the gentleman entered, he looked about, and selecting Phil, bowed to him, and then to us.

"'Ah, Mr. Hartley! how do you do?' said Val, shaking hands with him; 'and how is your cousin, whom we hope to have the pleasure of beating soon?—ha, ha, ha. Take a seat.'

"'Thank you,' said the other; 'but the fact is, that time's just now precious, and I wish to have a few words with Mr. Philip here.'

"'What is it, Hartley? How are you, Hartley? I'm glad to see you.'

"'Quite well, Phil; but if you have no objection, I would rather speak to you in another room. It's a matter of some importance, and of some delicacy, too.'

"'Oh, curse the delicacy, man; out with it.'

"'I really cannot, Phil, unless by ourselves.'

"They both then withdrew to the back parlor, where, after a period of about ten

minutes, Phil came rushing in with a face on him, and in a state of trepidation utterly indescribable; Hartley, on the other hand, cool and serious, following him.

"'Phil,' said he, 'think of what you are about to do. Don't exclude yourself hereafter from the rank and privileges of a gentleman. Pause, if you respect yourself, and regard your reputation as a man of courage.'

"'D——d fine talk in you—who—who's a fire-eater, Hartley. What do you think, father——?' Hartley put, or rather attempted to put his hand across his mouth, to prevent his cowardly and degrading communication; but in vain. 'What do you think, father,' he continued, 'but there's that cowardly scoundrel, young M'Loughlin, has sent me a challenge? Isn't the country come to a pretty pass, when a Papist durst do such a thing?'

"'Why not a Papist?' said Hartley. 'Has not a Papist flesh, and blood, and bones, like another man? Is a Papist to be insensible to insult? Is he to sit down tamely and meanly under disgrace and injury? Has he no soul to feel the dignity of just resentment? Is he not to defend his sister, when her character has been basely and treacherously ruined? Is he to see her stretched on her death-bed, by your villainy, and not to avenge her? By heavens, if, under the circumstances of the provocation which you gave him, and his whole family, he would be as mean and cowardly a poltroon as I find you to be—if he suffered—'

"'Do you call me a poltroon?' said Phil, so shivering and pale, that his voice betrayed his cowardice.

"'Yes,' said the other, 'as arrant a poltroon as ever I met. I tell you, you must either fight him, or publish a statement of your own unparalleled disgrace. Don't think you shall get out of it.'

"'I tell you, sir,' said Val, 'that he shall *not* fight him. I would not suffer a son of mine to put himself on a level with such a person as young M'Loughlin.'

"'On a level with him he never will be, for no earthly advantage could raise him to it; but pray, Mr. M'Clutchy, who are you?'

"'Val's brow fell, and his lip paled and quivered, as the fine young fellow looked him steadily in the face.

"'Never mind him, father,' said Phil; 'you know he's a fire-eater.'

"'There is no use in altercations of this sort,' replied Val, calmly. 'As for young M'Loughlin, or old M'Loughlin, if they think themselves injured, they have the laws of the land to appeal to for redress. As for us, we will fight them with other weapons besides pistols and firearms.'

"'D——n my honor,' said Phil, 'if I'd stoop to fight any Papist. Aren't they all rebels? And what gentleman would fight a rebel?'

"'Honor!' exclaimed Hartley; 'don't profane that sacred word—I can have no more patience with such a craven-hearted rascal, who could stoop to such base revenge against the unsullied reputation of a virtuous and admirable girl, because she spurned your scoundrelly addresses.'

"'He never paid his addresses to her,' said Val;—'never.'

"'No I didn't,' said Phil. 'At any rate I never had any notion of *marrying* her.'

"'You are a dastardly liar, sir,' responded Hartley. 'You know you had. How can your father and you look each other in the face, when you say so?'

"'Go on,' said Phil, '*you're a fire-eater:* so you may say what you like.'

"'Didn't your father, in your name, propose for her upon some former occasion, in the fair of Castle Cumber, and he remembers the answer he got.'

"'Go on,' said Phil, 'you're a fire-eater; that's all I have to say to you.'

"'And now, having ruined her reputation by a base and cowardly plot concocted with a wicked old woman, who would blast the whole family if she could, because M'Loughlin transported her felon son; you, now, like a paltry clown as you are, skulk out of the consequences of your treachery, and refuse to give satisfaction for the diabolical injury you have inflicted on the whole family.'

"'Go on,' said Phil, 'you're a fire-eater.'

"'You forget,' said Val, 'that I am a magistrate, and what the consequences may be to yourself for carrying a hostile message.'

"'Ah,' said Hartley, 'you are a magistrate, and shame on the government that can stoop to the degradation of raising such rascals as you are to become dispensers of justice; it is you and the like of you, that are a curse to the country. As for you, Phil M'Clutchy, I now know, and always suspected, the stuff you are made of. You are a disgrace to the very Orangemen you associate with; for they are, in general, brave fellows, although too often cruel and oppressive when hunted on and stimulated by such as you and your rascally upstart of a father.'

"'Go on,' said Phil, 'you are a fire-eater.'

"'I now leave you both,' continued the young Hotspur, with a blazing eye and flushed cheek, 'with the greatest portion of scorn and contempt which one man can bestow upon another.'

"'Go off,' said Phil, 'you are a fire-eater.'

"'Phil,' said the father, 'send for M'Murt, and let him get the ejectments from M'Slime —we shall not, at all events, be insulted and bearded by Papists, or their emissaries, so long as I can clear one of them off the estate.'

"'But, good God, Mr. M'Clutchy, surely these other Papists you speak of, have not participated in the offences, if such they are, of M'Loughlin and Harman.'

"'Ay, but they're all of the same kidney,' said Phil; 'they hate us because we keep them down.'

"'And what can be more natural than that?' I observed; 'just reverse the matter —suppose they were in your place, and kept *you* down, would you love them for it?'

"'Why, what kind of talk is that,' said Phil, 'they keep us down! Are they not rebels?'

"'You observed,' I replied, getting tired of this sickening and senseless bigotry, 'that you wished to make a proposal of some kind to me before I went.'

"'Yes,' he replied, 'I wished, if it be a thing that you remain in the neighborhood, to propose that you should become an Orangeman, and join my father's lodge. You say you want a farm on the estate; now, if you do, take my advice and become an Orangeman; you will then have a stronger claim, for my father always gives them the preference.'

"'By Lord Cumber's desire, Phil; but I shall be very happy, indeed, sir,' proceeded Val, 'that is, provided you get an introduction—for, at present, you will pardon me for saying we are strangers.'

"'I should first wish to witness the proceedings of an Orange Lodge,' I said, 'but I suppose that, of course, is impossible, unless to the initiated.'

"'Certainly, of course,' said M'Clutchy.

"'But, father,' said Phil, 'couldn't we admit him after the business of the lodge is concluded.'

"'It is not often done,' replied the father; 'but it sometimes is—however, we shall have the pleasure, Mr. Easel—(I forgot to say that I had sent in my card, so that he knew my name),—we shall have the pleasure of a better acquaintance, I trust.'

"'I tell you what,' said Phil, leaping off his chair, 'd——n my honor, but I was wrong to let young Hartley go without a thrashing. The cowardly scoundrel was exceedingly insulting.'

"'No, no, Phil,' said the father; 'you acted with admirable coolness and prudence.'

"'I tell you I ought to have kicked the rascal out,' said Phil, getting into a passion; 'I'll follow him and teach the impudent vagabond a lesson he wants.'

"He seized his hat, and buttoned up his coat, as if for combat, whilst he spoke.

"'Phil, be quiet,' said his father, rising up and putting his arms about him; 'be quiet now. There will be no taming him down, if his spirit gets up,' said Val, addressing me; 'for all our sakes, Phil, keep quiet and sit down. Good heaven! the strength of him! Phil, keep quiet, I say, you shan't go after him.'

"'Let me go,' shouted the other; 'let me go, I say. I will smash him to atoms. Upon my honor and reputation, he shall not escape me this way—I'll send him home a hoop—a triangle—a zoologist. I'll beat him into mustard, the cowardly scoundrel! And only you were a magistrate, father, I would have done it before you. Let me go, I say —the M'Clutchy blood is up in me! Father, you're a scoundrel if you hold me! You know what a lion I am—what a raging lion, when roused. Hands off, M'Clutchy, I say, when you know I'm a thunderbolt.'

"The tugging and pulling that took place here between the father and son were extraordinary, and I could not in common decency decline assisting the latter to hold him in. I consequently lent him my aid seriously; but this only made things worse:—the more he was held, the more violent and outrageous he became. He foamed at the mouth—stormed—swore—and tore about with such vehemence, that I really began to think the fellow was a dull flint, which produced fire slowly, but that there *was* fire in him. The struggle still proceeded, and we pulled and dragged each other through every part of the house:—chairs, and tables, and office-stools were all overturned—and Phil's cry was still for war.

"It's all to no purpose,' he shouted—'I'll not leave an unbroken bone in that scoundrel Hartley's body.'

"'I know you wouldn't, if you got at him,' said Val. 'He would certainly be the death of him,' he added aside to me; 'he would give him some fatal blow, and that's what I'm afraid of.'

"Phil was now perfectly furious—in fact he resembled a drunken man, and might have passed for such.

"'Hartley, you scoundrel, where are you, till I make mummy of you?' he shouted.

"'Here I am,' replied Hartley, entering the room, walking up to him, and looking him sternly in the face—'here I am—what's your will with me?'

"So comic a paralysis was, perhaps, never witnessed. Phil stood motionless, helpless, speechless. The white cowardly froth rose

to his lips, his color became ashy, his jaw fell, he shook, shrunk into himself, and gasped for breath—his eyes became hollow, his squint deepened, and such was his utter prostration of strength, that his very tongue lolled out with weakness, like that of a newly dropped calf, when attempting to stand for the first time. At length he got out—

"'Hold! I believe, I'll restrain myself; but only my father's a magistrate——'

"'Your father's a scoundrel, and you are another,' said Hartley; 'and here's my respect for you.'

"Whilst speaking, he caught Phil by the nose with one hand, and also by the collar of his coat with the other, and in this position led him, in a most comical way, round the room, after which he turned him about, and inflicted a few vigorous kicks upon a part of him which must be nameless.

"'I am not sorry,' said he, 'that I forgot my note-case in the other room, as it has given me an opportunity of taming a raging lion so easily.'

"'Go on,' said Phil, whose language, as well as valor, was fairly exhausted, 'it's well *you're a fire-eater*, and my father a magistrate, or by my honor, I'd know how to deal with you.'

"Such, my dear Spinageberd, is a domestic sketch of the Agent and Under Agent of that exceedingly sapient nobleman, Lord Cumber; and if ever, excellent landlord that he is, he should by any possible chance come to see these lines, perhaps he might be disposed to think that an occasional peep at his own property, and an examination into the principles upon which it is managed, might open to him a new field of action worth cultivating, even as an experiment not likely to end in any injurious result to either him or it. In a day or two I shall call upon Mr. Solomon M'Slime, with whom I am anxious to have a conversation, as, indeed, I am with the leading characters on the property. You may accordingly expect an occasional batch of observations from me, made upon the spot, and fresh from my interviews with the individuals to whom they relate."

CHAPTER XVII.

A Moral Survey, or a Wise Man led by a Fool—Marks of Unjust Agency—Reflections thereon—A Mountain Water-Spout, and Rising of a Torrent—The Insane Mother over the Graves of her Family—Raymond's Humanity—His Rescue from Death.

"Friday, * * *

"I HAVE *amused* myself—you will see how appropriate the word is by and by—since my last communication, in going over the whole Castle Cumber Estate, and noting down the traces which this irresponsible and rapacious oppressor, aided by his constables, bailiffs, and blood-hounds, have left behind them. When I describe the guide into whose hands I have committed myself, I am inclined to think you will not feel much disposed to compliment me on my discretion; —the aforesaid guide being no other than a young fellow, named Raymond-na-Hattha, which means, they tell me, Raymond of the Hats—a sobriquet very properly bestowed on him in consequence of a habit he has of always wearing three or four hats at a time, one within the other—a circumstance which, joined to his extraordinary natural height and great strength, gives him absolutely a gigantic appearance. This Raymond is the fool of the parish; but in selecting him for my conductor, I acted under the advice of those who knew him better than I could. There is not, in fact, a field or farm-house, or a cottage, within a circumference of miles, which he does not know, and where he is not also known. He has ever since his childhood evinced a most extraordinary fancy for game cocks—an attachment not at all surprising, when it is known that not only was his father, Morgan Monahan, the most celebrated breeder and Hander of that courageous bird—but his mother, Poll Doolin—married women here frequently preserve, or are called by, their maiden names through life—who learned it from her husband, was equally famous for this very feminine accomplishment. Poor Raymond, notwithstanding his privation, is, however, exceedingly shrewd in many things, especially where he can make himself understood. As he speaks, however, in unconnected sentences, in which there is put forth no more than one phase of the subject he alludes to, or the idea he entertains, it is unquestionably not an easy task to understand him without an interpreter. He is singularly fond of children—very benevolent—and consequently feels a degree of hatred and horror at anything in the shape of cruelty or oppression, almost beyond belief, in a person deprived of reason. This morning he was with me by appointment, about half-past nine, and after getting his breakfast ——but no matter—the manipulation he exhibited would have been death to a dyspeptic patient, from sheer envy—we sallied forth to trace this man, M'Clutchy, by the awful marks of ruin, and tyranny, and persecution; for these words convey the principles of what he hath left, and is leaving behind him.

"'Now, Raymond,' said I, 'as you know the country well, I shall be guided by you.

I wish to see a place called Drum Dhu. Can you conduct me there?'

"'Ay!' he replied with surprise; 'Why! Sure there's scarcely anybody there *now*. When we go on farther, we may look up, but we'll see no smoke, as there used to be. 'Twas there young Torly Regan died on that day—an' her, poor Mary—but they're all gone from her—and Hugh the eldest is in England or America—but *him*—the youngest—he'll never waken—and what will the poor mother do for his white head now that she hasn't it to look at? No, he wouldn't waken, although I brought him the cock.'

"'Of whom are you speaking now, Raymond?'

"'I'll tell you two things that's the same,' he replied; 'and I'll tell you the man that has them both.'

"'Let me hear, Raymond.'

"'The devil's blessin' and God's curse;—sure they're the same—ha, ha—there now—that's one. You didn't know that—no, no: you didn't.'

"'And who is it that has them, Raymond?'

"'M'Clutchy—Val the Vulture; sure 'twas he did *that* all, and is doin' it still. Poor Mary!—Brian will never waken;—she'll never see his eyes again, 'tany rate—nor his white head—oh! his white head! God ought to kill Val, and I wondher he doesn't.'

"'Raymond, my good friend,' said I, 'if you travel at this rate, I must give up the journey altogether.'

"The fact is, that when excited, as he was now by the topic in question, he gets into what is termed a sling trot, which carries him on at about six miles an hour, without ever feeling fatigued. He immediately slackened his pace, and looked towards me, with a consciousness of having forgotten himself and acted wrongly.

"'Well, no,' said he, 'I won't; but sure I hate *him*.'

"'Hate whom?'

"'M'Clutchy—and *that was it;* for I always do it; but I won't again, for you couldn't keep up wid me if I spoke about him.'

"We then turned towards the mountains; and as we went along, the desolate impresses of the evil agent began here and there to become visible. On the road-side there were the humble traces of two or three cabins, whose little hearths had been extinguished, and whose walls were levelled to the earth. The black fungus, the burdock, the nettle, and all those offensive weeds that follow in the train of oppression and ruin were here; and as the dreary wind stirred them into sluggish motion, and piped its melancholy wail through these desolate little mounds, I could not help asking myself—if those who do these things ever think that there is a reckoning in after life, where power, and insolence, and wealth misapplied, and rancor, and pride, and rapacity, and persecution, and revenge, and sensuality, and gluttony, will be placed face to face with those humble beings, on whose rights and privileges of simple existence they have trampled with such a selfish and exterminating tread. A host of thoughts and reflections began to crowd upon my mind: but the subject was too painful—and after avoiding it as well as I could, we proceeded on our little tour of observation.

"How easy it is for the commonest observer to mark even the striking characters that are impressed on the physical features of an estate which is managed by care and kindness—where general happiness and principles of active industry are diffused through the people? And, on the other hand, do not all the depressing symbols of neglect and mismanagement present equally obvious exponents of their operation, upon properties like this of Castle Cumber? On this property, it is not every tenant that is allowed to have an interest in the soil at all, since the accession of M'Clutchy. He has succeeded in inducing the head landlord to decline granting leases to any but those who are his political supporters—that is, who will vote for him or his nominee at an election; or, in other words, who will enable him to sell both their political privileges and his own, to gratify his cupidity or ambition, without conferring a single advantage upon themselves. From those, therefore, who have too much honesty to prostitute their votes to his corrupt and selfish negotiations with power, leases are withheld, in order that they may, with more becoming and plausible oppression, be removed from the property, and the staunch political supporter brought in in their stead. This may be all very good policy, but it is certainly bad humanity, and worse religion, In fact, it is the practice of that cruel dogma which prompts us to sacrifice the principles of others to our own, and to deprive them of the very privilege which we ourselves claim—that of acting according to our conscientious impressions. 'Do unto others,' says Mr. M'Clutchy and his class, as you would *not* wish that others should do unto you.' How beautifully here is the practice of the loud and headlong supporter of the Protestant Church, and its political ascendancy, made to harmonize with the principles of that neglected thing called the Gospel? In fact as we went along, it was easy to mark, on the houses and farmsteads about us, the in-

justice of making this heartless distinction. The man who felt himself secure and fixed by a vested right in the possession of his tenement, had heart and motive to work and improve it, undepressed by the consciousness that his improvements to-day might be trafficked on by a wicked and unjust agent to-morrow. He knows, that in developing all the advantages and good qualities of the soil, he is not only discharging an important duty to himself and his landlord, but also to his children's children after him; and the result is, that the comfort, contentment, and self-respect which he gains by the consciousness of his security, are evident at a glance upon himself, his house, and his holding. On the other hand, reverse this picture, and what is the consequence? Just what is here visible. There is a man who may be sent adrift on the shortest notice, unless he is base enough to trade upon his principles and vote against his conscience. What interest has *he* in the soil, or in the prosperity of his landlord? If he make improvements this year, he may see the landlord derive all the advantages of them the next; or, what is quite as likely, he may know that some Valentine M'Clutchy may put them in his own pocket, and keep the landlord in the dark regarding the whole transaction. What a bounty on dishonesty and knavery in an agent is this? How unjust to the interest of the tenant, in the first place—in the next to that of the landlord—and, finally, how destructive to the very nature and properties of the soil itself, which rapidly degenerates by bad and negligent culture, and consequently becomes impoverished and diminished in value. All this was evident as we went along. Here was warmth, and wealth, and independence staring us in the face; there was negligence, desponding struggle, and decline, conscious, as it were, of their unseemly appearance, and anxious, one would think, to shrink away from the searching eye of observation.

"'But here again, Raymond; what have we here? There is a fine looking farm-house, evidently untenanted. How is that?'

"'Ha, ha,' replied Raymond with a bitter smile, 'ha, ha! Let them take it, and see what *Captain Whiteboy* will do? *He* has the possession—ha, ha—an' who'll get *him* to give it up? Who dare take that, or any of Captain Whiteboy's farms? But sure it's not much—only a coal, a rushlight, and a prod of a pike or a bagnet—but I know who ought to have *them*.'

"The house in question was considerably dilapidated. Its doors were not visible, and its windows had all been shivered. Its smokeless chimnies, its cold and desolate appearance, together with the still more ruinous condition of the outhouses, added to the utter silence which prevailed about it, and the absence of every symptom of life and motion—all told a tale which has left many a bloody moral to the country. The slaps, gates, and enclosures were down—the hedges broken or cut away—the fences trampled on and levelled to the earth—and nothing seemed to thrive—for the garden was overrun with them—but the rank weeds already alluded to, as those which love to trace the footsteps of ruin and desolation, in order to show, as it were, what *they* leave behind them. As we advanced, other and more startling proofs of M'Clutchy came in our way—proofs which did not consist of ruined houses, desolate villages, or roofless cottages—but of those unfortunate persons, whose simple circle of domestic life—whose little cares, and struggles, and sorrows, and affections, formed the whole round of their humble existence, and its enjoyments, as given them by Almighty God himself. All these, however, like the feelings and affections of the manacled slave, were as completely overlooked by those who turned them adrift, as if in possessing such feelings, they had invaded a right which belonged only to their betters, and which the same betters, by the way, seldom exercise either in such strength or purity as those whom they despise and oppress. Aged men we met, bent with years, and weighed down still more by that houseless sorrow, which is found accompanying them along the highways of life—through its rugged solitudes and its dreariest paths—in the storm and in the tempest—wherever they go—in want, nakedness, and destitution—still at their side is that houseless sorrow—pouring into their memories and their hearts the conviction, which is most terrible to old age, that it has no home here but the grave—no pillow on which to forget its cares but the dust. The sight of these wretched old men, turned out from the little holdings that sheltered their helplessness, to beg a morsel, through utter charity, in the decrepitude of life, was enough to make a man wish that he had never been born to witness such a wanton abuse of that power which was entrusted to man for the purpose of diffusing happiness instead of misery. All these were known to Raymond, who, as far as he could, gave me their brief and unfortunate history. That which showed us, however, the heartless evils of the clearance system in its immediate operation upon the poorer 'classes, was the groups of squalid females who traversed the country, accompanied by their pale and sickly looking children, all in a state of mendicancy, and wofully destitute of clothing. The system

in this case being to deny their husbands employment upon the property, in order to drive them, by the strong scourge of necessity, off it, the poor men were compelled to seek it elsewhere, whilst their sorrowing and heart-broken families were fain to remain and beg a morsel *from those who were best acquainted with the history of their expulsion*, and who, consequently, could yield to them and their little ones a more cordial and liberal sympathy. After thus witnessing the consequences of bad management, and worse feeling, in the shape of houses desolate, villages levelled, farms waste, old age homeless, and feeble mothers tottering under their weaker children—after witnessing, I say, all this, we came to the village called Drum Dhu, being one of those out of which these unhappy creatures were so mercilessly driven.

"A village of this description is, to say the least of it, no credit to the landed proprietors of any country. It is the necessary result of a bad system. But we know that if the landlord paid the attention which he ought to pay, to both the rights and duties of his property, a bad system could never be established upon it. I am far from saying, indeed, my dear Spinageberd, there are not cases in which the landlord finds himself in circumstances of great difficulty. Bad, unprincipled, vindictive, and idle tenants enough there are in this country—as I am given to understand from those who know it best—plotting scoundrels, who, like tainted sheep, are not only corrupt themselves, but infect others, whom they bring along with themselves to their proper destination, the gallows. Enough and too many of these there are to be found, who are cruel without cause, and treacherous without provocation; and this is evident, by the criminal records of the country, from which it is clear that it is not in general the aggrieved man who takes justice in his own hands, but the idle profligate I speak of now. Many indeed of all these, it is an act due to public peace and tranquility to dislodge from any and from every estate; but at the same time, it is not just that the many innocent should suffer as well as the guilty few. To return, however, to the landlord. It often happens, that when portions of his property fall out of lease, he finds it over-stocked with a swarm of paupers, who are not *his* tenants at all and never were—but who in consequence of the vices of sub-letting, have multiplied in proportion to the rapacity and extortion of middle-men, and third-men, and fourth-men—and though last, not least, of the political exigencies of the landlord himself, to serve whose purposes they were laboriously subdivided off into tattered legions of fraud, corruption, and perjury. Having, therefore, either connived at, or encouraged the creation of these creatures upon his property for corrupt purposes, is he justified, when such a change in the elective franchise has occurred as renders them of no political importance to him, in turning them out of their little holdings, without aid or provision of some sort, and without reflecting besides, that they are in this, the moment of their sorest distress, nothing else than the neglected tools and forgotten victims of his own ambition. Or can he be surprised, after hardening them into the iniquity of half a dozen elections, that he finds fellows in their number who would feel no more scruples in putting a bullet into him from behind a hedge, than they would into a dog? Verily, my dear Simon Spinageberd, the more I look into the political and civil education which the people of Ireland have received, I am only surprised that property in this country rests upon so firm and secure a basis as I find it does.

"On arriving at Drum Dhu, the spectacle which presented itself to us was marked, not merely by the vestiges of inhumanity and bad policy, but by the wanton insolence of sectarian spirit and bitter party feeling. On some of the doors had been written with chalk or charcoal, "Clear off—to hell or Connaught!" "Down with Popery!" "M'Clutchy's cavalry and Ballyhack wreckers for ever!" In accordance with these offensive principles most of all the smaller cottages and cabins had been literally wrecked and left uninhabitable, in the violence of this bad impulse, although at the present moment they are about to be re-erected, to bear out the hollow promises that will be necessary for the forthcoming election. The village was indeed a miserable and frightful scene. There it stood, between thirty and forty small and humble habitations, from which, with the exception of about five or six, all the inmates had been dispossessed, without any consideration for age, sex, poverty, or sickness. Nay, I am assured that a young man was carried out during the agonies of death, and expired in the street, under the fury of a stormy and tempestuous day. Of those who remained, four who are Protestants, and two Roman Catholics, have promised to vote with M'Clutchy, who is here the great representative of Lord Cumber and his property. If, indeed, you were now to look upon these two miserable lines of silent and tenantless walls, most of them unroofed, and tumbled into heaps of green ruin, that are fast melting out of shape, for they were mostly composed of mere peat—you would surely say, as the Eastern Vizier said in the

apologue. 'God prosper Mr. Valentine M'Clutchy!—for so long as Lord Cumber has him for an agent, he will never want plenty of ruined villages!' My companion muttered many things to himself, but said nothing intelligible, until he came to one of the ruins pretty near the centre:—

"'Ay,' said he, 'here is the place they said he died—here before the door—and in there is where he lay during his long sickness. The wet thatch and the sods is lying there now. Many a time I was with him. Poor Torley!'

"'Of whom do you speak now, Raymond?' I asked.

"'Come away,' he said, not noticing my question,—'come till I show you the other place that the neighbors built privately when he was dying—the father I mean—ay, and the other wid the white head, him that wouldn't waken—come.'

"I followed him, for truth to tell, I was sick at heart of all that I had witnessed that morning, and now felt anxious, if I could, to relieve my imagination of this melancholy imagery and its causes altogether. He went farther up towards the higher mountains, in rather a slanting direction, but not immediately into their darkest recesses, and after a walk of about two miles more, he stopped at the scattered turf walls of what must once have been a cold, damp, and most comfortless cabin.

"'There,' said he, 'I saw it all; 'twas the blood-hounds. *He* died, and her white-headed boy died; him, you know, that wouldn't waken—there is where they both died; and see here'—there was at this moment a most revolting expression of ferocious triumph in his eye as he spoke—'see, here the blood-hound dropped, for the bullet went through him!—Ha, ha, that's one; the three dead—the three dead! Come now, come, come.' He then seemed much changed, for he shuddered as he spoke, and after a little time, much to my astonishment, a spirit of tenderness and humanity settled on his face, his eyes filled with tears, and he exclaimed, 'Poor Mary! they're all gone, and she will never see his white head again; and his eyes won't open any more; no, they're all gone, all gone: oh! come away!'

"I had heard as much of this brutal tragedy as made his allusions barely intelligible, but on attempting to gain any further information from him, he relapsed, as he generally did, into his usual abruptness of manner. He now passed down towards the cultivated country, at a pace which I was once more obliged to request him to moderate.

"'Well,' said he, 'if *you* don't care, *I* needn't, for we'll have it—I know by the roarin' of the river and by the look of the mountains there above.'

"'What shall we have, Raymond?' I inquired.

"'No matther,' said he, rather to himself than to me, 'we can cross the stick.* But I'll show you the place, for I was there at the time, and his coffin was on the top of his father's. Ha, ha, I liked that, and they all cried but Mary, and she laughed and sung, and clapped her hands when the clay was makin' a noise upon them, and then the people cried more. *I cried* for *him* in the little coffin, for I loved him—I wondher God doesn't kill M'Clutchy—the curse o' God, and the blessin' o' the devil on him! Ha, ha, there's one now: let him take it.'

"We still proceeded at a brisk pace for about a mile and a half, leaving the dark and savage hills behind us, when Raymond turning about, directed my attention to the mountains. These were overhung by masses of black clouds, that were all charged with rain and the elements of a tempest. From one of these depended a phenomenon which I had never witnessed before—I mean a water spout, wavering in its black and terrible beauty over this savage scenery, thus adding its gloomy grandeur to the sublimity of the thunder-storm, which now deepened, peal after peal, among the mountains. To such as are unacquainted with mountain scenery, and have never witnessed an inland water spout, it is only necessary to say, that it resembles a long inverted cone, that hangs from a bank of clouds whose blackness is impenetrable. It appears immovable at the upper part, where it joins the clouds; but, as it gradually tapers to a long and delicate point, it waves to and fro with a beautiful and gentle motion, which blends a sense of grace with the very terror it excites. It seldom lasts more than a few minutes, for, as soon as the clouds are dispersed by the thunder it disappears so quickly, that, having once taken your eye off it when it begins to diminish, it is gone before you can catch it again—a fact which adds something of a wild and supernatural character to its life-like motion and appearance. The storm in which we saw it, was altogether confined to the mountains, where it raged for a long time, evidently pouring down deluges of rain, whilst on the hill side which we traversed, there was nothing but calmness and sunshine.

"'It will be before us,' said Raymond, pointing to a dry torrent bed close beside us;

* In mountain rivers a "stick," or plank, is frequently a substitute for a bridge.

'whisht, here it is—ha, ha, I like that—see it, see it!'

"I looked in the direction of his hand, and was entranced in a kind of wild and novel delight, by witnessing a large bursting body of water, something between a dark and yellow hue, tumbling down the bed of the river, with a roaring noise and impetuosity of which I had never formed any conception before. From the spot we stood on, up to its formation among the mountains, the river was literally a furious mountain torrent, foaming over its very banks, whilst from the same place down to the cultivated country it was almost dry, with merely an odd pool, connected here and there by a stream too shallow to cover the round worn stones in its channel. So rapid, and, indeed dangerous, is the rise of a mountain flood, that many a life of man and beast have fallen victims to the fatal speed of its progress. Raymond now bent his steps over to the left, and, in a few minutes, we entered a graveyard, so closely surrounded by majestic whitethorns, that it came upon me by surprise.

"'Whisht,' said he, 'she's often here—behind this ould chapel. For 'tis there *they* are, the two big coffins and the little one—but I liked the little one best.'

"He conducted me to an old mullioned window in the gable, through which a single glance discovered to me the female of whose insanity, and the dreadful cause of it, I had before heard. Whilst pointing her out to me, he laid his hand upon my shoulder, and, heavy as it was, I could feel the more distinctly by its vibrations that he trembled; and, on looking into his face I perceived that he had got deadly pale, and that the same spirit of humanity and compassion, to which I have alluded, had returned to it once more. There was not reason in his face, to be sure, but there certainly was an expression there, trembling, and mild, and beautiful, as is the light of the morning star, before the glory of the sun has unveiled itself in heaven. To Raymond's mind that early herald had indeed come, but that was all—to him had never arisen the light of perfect day.

"'There she is,' said he, 'look at her, but don't spake.'

"I looked at her with deep and melancholy interest. She sat on a broken tombstone that lay beside the grave of those in whom her whole happiness in this life had centered. Her dress was wofully neglected, her hair loose, that is, it escaped from her cap, her white bosom was bare, and her feet without shoe or stocking. I could easily perceive, that great as her privations had been, God had now, perhaps in mercy, taken away her consciousness of them, for she often smiled whilst talking to herself, and occasionally seemed to feel that fulness of happiness which, whether real or not, appears so frequently in the insane. At length she stooped down, and kissed the clay of their graves, exclaiming——

"'There is something here that I love; but nobody will tell me what it is—no, not one. No matter, I know I love something—I know I love somebody—somebody—and *they* love me—but now will no one tell me where they are? Wouldn't Hugh come to me if I called him? but sure I did, and he won't come—and Torley, too, won't come, and my own poor white head, even he won't come to me. But whisht, may be they're asleep; ay, asleep, and ah, sure if ever any creatures wanted sleep, they do—sleep, darlin's, sleep—I'll not make a noise to waken one of you—but what's that?'

"Here she clasped her hands, and looked with such a gaze of affright and horror around her, as I never saw on a human face before.

"'What's that? It's them, it's them,' she exclaimed—'I hear their horses' feet, I hear them cursin' and swearin'—but no matther, I'm not to be frightened. Amn't I Hugh Roe's wife?—Isn't here God on my side, an' are ye a match for him!—Here—here's my breast, my heart, and through that you must go before you touch him. But then,' she added, with a sigh, 'where's them that I love, an' am waitin' for, an' why don't they come?'

"She once more stooped down, and kissing the grave, whispered, but loud enough to be heard, 'are ye here? If ye are, ye may speak to *me*—it's not them, they don't know where ye are yet—but sure ye may speak to me. It's Mary, Hugh—your mother, Torley—your own mother, Brian dear, with the fair locks.'

"'Ay,' said Raymond, 'that's the white-head she misses—that's him that I loved—but sure she needn't call him for he won't waken. I'll spake to her.' As he uttered the words he passed rapidly out of a broken portion of the wall, and, before she was aware of his approach, stood beside her. I thought she would have been startled by his unexpected appearance, but I was mistaken; she surveyed him not only without alarm, but benignly; and after having examined him for some moments, she said, 'there are three of them, but they will not come—don't you know how I loved somebody?'

"'Which o' them?' said Raymond.

"'It's a long sleep,' she said, without noticing the question, 'a long sleep—well, they want it, poor things, for there was but little for them but care and cowld, and hardship. Sure we had sickness—Torley left us first; but,—let me see,—where did Poor Brian go? Well, no matter, we had sickness, as I

said, and sometimes we had little or nothing to eat, but sure still wasn't my hand tendher about them. I felt my heart in my fingers when I touched them, and, if I gave them a drink didn't my heart burn, and oh! it was then I knew how I loved them! Whisht, then, poor things—och sure I'll do my best—I'll struggle for you as well as I can—you have none but me to do it—it's not the black wather I'd give my darlin' child if I had bether; but gruel is what I can't get, for the sorra one grain of mail is undher the roof wid me; but I'll warm the cowld potato for my pet, and you can play wid it till you fall asleep, accushla. Yes, I will kiss you; for afther all, isn't that the richest little treat that your poor mother has to comfort you with in your poor cowld sick bed—one and all o' ye.'

"Here she rocked herself to and fro, precisely as if she had been sitting by the sick bed, then stooping down a third time, she kissed the earth that contained them once more—

"'Ah,' she exclaimed, 'how cowld their lips are! how cowld my white-haired boy's lips are! and their sleep is long—Oh! but their sleep is long!'

"Raymond, during these incoherent expressions, stood mutely beside her, his lips, however, often moving, as if he were communing with himself, or endeavoring to shape some words of rude comfort in her sorrows; but ever and anon, as he seemed to go about it, his face moved with feelings which he could not utter, like the surface of a brook stirred by the breeze that passes over it. At length he laid his hand gently on her shoulder, and exclaimed in a tone of wild and thrilling compassion—

"'Mary!'

"She then started for a moment, and looking around her with something like curiosity rather than alarm, replied—

"'Well.'

"'Mary,' said he, 'make haste and go to heaven; make haste and go to heaven—you'll find them all there—Hugh Regan, and Torley, and little Brian. Don't stop here, for there will be more blood, more blood-hounds, and more Val M'Clutchy's.'

"She did not seem to have noticed his particular words, but there appeared to have been some association awakened which gave a new impulse to her thoughts—

"'Come away,' said she, 'come away!'

"Raymond turned, and looking towards where I stood, beckoned me to follow them; and truly it was a touching sight to see this unregulated attempt of the poor innocent, to sooth the heavy sorrows—if such they were now—of one of whose malady could appreciate no sympathy, and whose stricken heart was apparently beyond the reach of consolation forever.

"Both now proceeded in silence, Raymond still holding her by the hand, and affording her every assistance, as we crossed the fields, in order to shorten the path which led us to the Castle Cumber road. On coming to a ditch, for instance, he would lift her, but still with care and gentleness, in his powerful arms, and place her, with scarcely any effort of her own strength, which, indeed, was nearly gone, safely and easily upon the other side.

"We had now crossed that part of the sloping upland which led us out upon a bridle road, that passed close by M'Loughlin's house and manufactory, and which slanted across a ford in the river, a little above their flax-mill. Having got out upon this little road, Raymond, who, as well as his companion, had for some time past proceeded in silence, stopped suddenly, and said—'Where is heaven, Mary?'

"She involuntarily looked up towards the sky, with a quick but more significant glance than any I had yet seen her give; but this immediately passed away, and she said in a low voice, very full of the usual tones of sorrow:—'Heaven—it's there,' she replied, pointing behind her, towards the burying-place, 'in *their* graves!'

"Raymond looked at me, and smiled, as if much pleased with the answer. 'Ay,' said he, 'so it is—wherever *his* white head lies is heaven.'

"I cannot tell how it happened, but I know that I felt every source of tenderness and compassion in my heart moved and opened more by these simple words on both sides, than by all that had passed since we met her.

"In a few minutes more we reached that part of the road immediately adjoining M'Loughlin's house, and which expanded itself as it reached the river, that here became a ford, being crossed in ordinary cases by stone steps. As is usual in the case of such floods, which fall as rapidly as they rise, we found about a dozen persons of both sexes, some sitting, others standing, but all waiting until the river should subside so as to be passed with safety—the little wooden bridge alluded to having been literally swept away. Among these was Poll Doolin, the mother of Raymond, who, however, did not appear to take any particular notice of her, but kept close by, and directed all his attention to, unhappy Mary O'Regan. About half an hour had elapsed, when Raymond, casting his eye upon the decreasing torrent, said:—

"'It is now low enough—come, Mary, I

will carry you safe over—Raymond has often crossed it higher, ay, when it was over the rock there to our right—come.' He lifted her up in his arms without another word, and, with firm and confident steps, proceeded to ford the still powerful and angry stream.

"'Raymond, are you mad?' shouted his mother; 'ten times your strength couldn't stand that flood—come back, you headstrong creature, or you'll both be lost, as sure as you attempt it.'

"Her remonstrances, however, were in vain. Raymond did not even look back, nor pay the slightest attention to what she said.

"'Never mind them,' said he; 'I know best—it's often I crossed it.'

"On reaching the centre of the stream, however, he appeared to feel as if he had miscalculated the strength of either it or himself. He stood for a moment literally shaking like a reed in its strong current—the passive maniac still in his arms, uncertain whether to advance with her or go back. Experience, however, had often told him, that if the fording it were at all practicable, the danger was tenfold to return, for by the very act of changing the position, a man must necessarily lose the firmness of his opposition to the stream, and consequently be borne away without the power of resisting it. Raymond, therefore, balanced himself as steadily as possible, and by feeling and making sure his footing in the most cautious manner—the slightest possible slip or stumble being at that moment fatal—he, with surprising strength and courage, had just succeeded in placing her safely on the rock he had before alluded to, when a stone turned under him—his foot gave way—and the poor creature, whose reason was veiled to almost every impulse but that of a wild and touching humanity, tumbled down the boiling torrent, helpless and unresisting as a child, and utterly beyond the reach of assistance. My own sensations and feelings I really cannot describe, because, in point of fact, such was the tumult—the horror—of my mind at that moment, that I have no distinct recollection of my impressions. I think for a short space I must have lost both my sight and hearing, for I now distinctly remember to have heard, only for the first time, the piercing screams of his mother rising above the wild and alarming cries of the others—but not until he had gone down the stream, and disappeared round a sharp angle or bend, which it formed about eight or ten yards below where he fell.

"There grew a little to the left of the spot where this shocking disaster occurred, a small clump of whitethorn trees, so closely matted together, that it was impossible to see through them. We all, therefore, ran round as if by instinct, to watch the tumbling body of poor Raymond, when what was our surprise to see a powerful young man, about eight or ten yards below us, dashing into the stream; where, although the current was narrower, it was less violent, and holding by a strong projecting branch of hazel that grew on the bank, stretch across the flood, and, as the body of Raymond passed him, seize it with a vigorous grasp, which brought it close to where he stood. Feeling that both were now out of the force of the current, he caught it in his arms, and ere any of us had either time or presence of mind even to proffer assistance, he carried, or rather dragged it out of the water, and laid it on the dry bank.

"'Come,' said he, 'I am afraid there is little time to be lost—help me up with him to my father's, till we see what can be done to recover life, if life is left.'

"The fact is, however, that Raymond was not altogether insensible; for, as young M'Loughlin—the same, by the way, who had sent the message to Phil—had concluded, he opened his eyes, breathed, and after gulping up some water, looked about him.

"'Ah!' said he, 'poor Mary—she's gone to them at last; but she'll be happier with them. Take my hand,' said he to M'Loughlin, "sure I thought I could do it. Poor Mary!'

"This instantly directed our attention to the unhappy woman, whom we had all overlooked and forgotten for the moment, and I need not say that our satisfaction was complete, on finding her sitting calmly on the rock where Raymond had placed her, at the risk of his life. Poll Doolin, now seeing that her idiot son was safe, and feeling that she was indebted for his life to the son of that man on whom she is said by many to have wreaked such a fearful vengeance, through the ruined reputation of his only daughter, now approached the young man, and with her features deeply convulsed by a sense probably of her obligation to him, she stretched out her hand, 'John M'Loughlin,' said she, 'from this day out may God prosper me here and hereafter, if I'm not the friend of you and yours!'

"'Bad and vindictive woman,' replied the other indignantly, whilst he held back the hand she sought, 'our accounts are now settled—I have saved your son; you have murdered my sister. If you are capable of remorse I now leave you to the hell of your

own conscience, which can be but little less in punishment than that of the damned.'

"Raymond, whose attention had been divided between them and Mary O'Regan, now said—

"'Ha, ha, mother—there—that's one—you'll sleep sound now I hope, for you didn't lately—that little thing that comes to your bedside at night, won't trouble you any more, I suppose. No, no, the thing you say in your sleep, that is black in the face, has its tongue out, and the handkerchief drawn tight about its neck. You'd give back the money in your dhrame; but sorry a penny while you're waken, I'll engage.'

"Poll turned away rebuked, but not, if one could judge, either in resentment or revenge. Raymond's words she had not heard, and of course paid no attention to what he said; but the latter, now seeing that the river had fallen considerably, again dashed into the stream, and crossing over, lifted the poor insane widow off the rock, and setting her down in safety on the other side, they both proceeded onwards together.

"'The ford, sir, will not be passable for at least another hour,' said young M'Loughlin, addressing me, 'but if you will have the kindness to step up to my father's, and rest a little after your mountain journey, for I think you have been up the hills, you will find it at least more comfortable than standing here, and less fatiguing than going round by the bridge, which would make it at least five miles added to your journey.'

"I thanked him, said I felt obliged, and would gladly avail myself of his very civil invitation.

"'Perhaps,' he added, 'you might wish to see our flax and linen manufactory; if so, and that you do not think it troublesome, I will feel great pleasure in showing it to you.'

"I expressed my obligations, but pleaded fatigue, which indeed I felt; and we consequently soon found ourselves in his father's parlor, where I met a very venerable old gentleman, the Rev. Mr. Roche, the Roman Catholic pastor of the parish."

We must here exercise the privilege, which, at the commencement of this correspondence, we assured our readers we should reserve to ourselves—we allude to the ability which we possess, from ampler and clearer sources of information—to throw into Mr. Easel's correspondence, in their proper place, such incidents as he could not have possibly known, but which let in considerable light upon the progress of his narrative.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Cruel Consequences of Phil's Plot Against Mary M'Loughlin — Dreadful Determination of her Brothers—An Oath of Blood—Father Roche's Knowledge of Nature—Interview Between Mary and her Brothers—Influence and Triumph of Domestic Affection—An Execution by Val's Blood-Hounds.

The hellish and cowardly plot against Mary M'Loughlin's reputation, and which the reader knows has already been planned and perpetrated by Poll Doolin and Phil M'Clutchy, was, as such vile calumnies mostly are, generally successful with the public. On her own immediate relations and family, who knew her firmness, candor, purity of heart, and self-respect, the foul slander had no effect whatsoever, at least in shaking their confidence in her sense of honor and discretion. With the greedy and brutal public, however, it was otherwise; and the discovery of this fact, which reached them in a thousand ways, it was that filled their hearts with such unparalleled distress, terrible agony, and that expanding spirit of revenge which is never satisfied, until it closes on him whose crime has given it birth. In truth,—and it is not to be wondered at—as how almost could it be otherwise?—the diabolical and cowardly crime of Phil M'Clutchy towards their sweet and unoffending sister, had changed her three brothers from men into so many savage and insatiable Frankensteins, resolved never to cease dogging his guilty steps, until their vengeance had slaked its burning thirst in his caitiff blood.

Immediately after the night of its occurrence, a change began to take place in the conduct and deportment of their general acquaintances. Visitors dropped off, some from actual delicacy, and an unaffected compassion, and others from that shrinking fear of moral contagion, which is always most loudly and severely expressed by the private sinner and hypocrite. Their sister's conduct was, in fact, the topic of general discussion throughout the parish, and we need not say that such discussions usually were terminated—first in great compassion for the poor girl, and then as their virtue warmed, in as earnest denunciations of her guilt. To an indifferent person, however, without any prejudice either for or against her, it was really impossible, considering the satanic success with which the plot was managed, and the number of witnesses actually present at its accomplishment, to consider Miss M'Loughlin as free at least from gross and indefensible levity, and a most unjustifiable relaxation of female prudence, at a period when it was known she was actually engaged to another.

This certainly looked very suspicious, and we need scarcely say that a cessation of all visits, intimacy, and correspondence, immediately took place, on the part of female friends and acquaintances. In fact the innocent victim of this dastardly plot was completely deserted, and the little party of her friends was by no means a match for the large and godly hosts who charitably combined to establish her guilt. Her father, with all his manliness of character, and sterling integrity, was not distressed on his daughter's account only. There was another cause of anxiety to him equally deep—we mean the mysterious change that had come over his sons, in consequence of this blasting calamity. He saw clearly that they had come to the dark and stern determination of avenging their sister's disgrace upon its author, and that at whatever risk. This in truth to him was the greater affliction of the two, and he accordingly addressed himself with all his authority and influence over them, to the difficult task of plucking this frightful resolution out of their hearts. In his attempt to execute this task, he found himself baffled and obstructed by other circumstances of a very distracting nature. First, there were the rascally paragraphs alluding to his embarrassments on the one hand, and those which, while pretending to vindicate him and his partner from any risk of bankruptcy, levelled the assassin's blow at the reputation of his poor daughter, on the other. Both told; but the first with an effect which no mere moral courage or consciousness of integrity, however high, could enable him to meet. Creditors came in, alarmed very naturally at the reports against his solvency, and demanded settlement of their accounts from the firm. These, in the first instances, were immediately made out and paid; but this would not do—other claimants came, equally pressing—one after another—and each so anxious in the early panic to secure himself, that ere long the instability which, in the beginning, had no existence, was gradually felt, and the firm of Harman and M'Loughlin felt themselves on the eve of actual bankruptcy.

These matters all pressed heavily and bitterly on both father and sons. But we have yet omitted to mention that which, amidst all the lights in which the daughter contemplated the ruin of her fair fame, fell with most desolating consequences upon her heart—we mean her rejection by Harman, and the deliberate expression of his belief in her guilt. And, indeed, when our readers remember how artfully the web of iniquity was drawn around her, and the circumstances of mystery in which Harman himself had witnessed her connection with Poll Doolan, whose character for conducting intrigues he knew too well, they need not be surprised that he threw her off as a deceitful and treacherous wanton, in whom no man of a generous and honorable nature could or ought to place confidence, and who was unworthy even of an explanation. Mary M'Loughlin could have borne everything but this. Yes; the abandonment of friends—of acquaintances—of a fickle world itself, but here it was where her moral courage failed her. The very hope to which her heart had clung from its first early and innocent impulses—the man to whom she looked up as the future guide, friend, and partner of her life, and for whose sake and safety she had suffered herself to be brought within the meshes of her enemies and his—this man, her betrothed husband, had openly expressed his conviction of her being unfit to become his wife, upon hearing from his cousin and namesake an account of what that young man had witnessed. Something between a nervous and brain fever had seized her on the very night of this heinous stratagem; but from that she was gradually recovering when at length she heard, by accident, of Harman's having unequivocally and finally withdrawn from the engagement. Under this she sank. It was now in vain to attempt giving her support, or cheering her spirits. Depression, debility, apathy, restlessness, and all the symptoms of a breaking constitution and a broken heart, soon began to set in and mark her for an early, and what was worse, an ignominious grave. It was then that her brothers deemed it full time to act. Their father, on the night before the day on which poor Raymond was rescued from death, observed them secretly preparing fire-arms,—for they had already, as the reader knows, satisfied themselves that M'Clutchy, junior, would not fight—took an opportunity of securing their weapons in a place where he knew they could not be found. This, however, was of little avail—they told him it must and should be done, and that neither he nor any other individual in existence should debar them from the execution of their just, calm, and reasonable vengeance—for such were their very words. In this situation matters were, when about eleven o'clock the next morning, Father Roche, who, from the beginning, had been there to aid and console, as was his wont, wherever calamity or sorrow called upon him, made his appearance in the family, much to the relief of M'Loughlin's mind, who dreaded the gloomy deed which his sons had proposed to themselves to execute, and who knew besides, that in this good and pious priest he had a powerful and elo-

quent ally. After the first salutations had passed, M'Loughlin asked for a private interview with him; and when they had remained about a quarter of an hour together, the three sons were sent for, all of whom entered with silent and sullen resolution strongly impressed on their stern, pale, and immovable features. Father Roche himself was startled even into something like terror, when he witnessed this most extraordinary change in the whole bearing and deportment of the young men, whom he had always known so buoyant and open-hearted.

"My dear young friends," said he, calmly and affectionately, "your father has just disclosed to me a circumstance, to which, did it not proceed from his lips, I could not yield credit. Is it true that you have come to the most unchristian and frightful determination of shedding blood?"

"Call it just and righteous," said John, calmly.

"Yes," followed the other two, "it is both."

"In his cowardly crime he has evaded the responsibility of law," continued John, "and we care not if his punishment goes beyond law itself. We will answer for it with our lives—but in the mean time, HE MUST DIE."

"You see, Father Roche," observed M'Loughlin, "to what a hardened state the strong temptations of the devil has brought them."

"It is not that," said John; "it is affection for our injured sister, whom he has doubly murdered—it is also hatred of himself, and of the oppression we are receiving in so many shapes at his hands. HE MUST DIE."

"Yes," repeated the two brothers, "*he must die*, it is now too late."

"Ha!" said the priest, "I understand you; there is an oath here."

The three brothers smiled, but spoke not.

"Are ye my sons?" said the father, in tears, "and will you, who were ever obedient and dutiful, disregard me now?"

"In this one thing we must," said John; "*we know you not now as our father* Am I right?" said he, addressing his brothers.

"You are right," they replied, "in this thing he is *not* our father."

"Great God!" said the priest, trembling with absolute dread at a scene so different from any he had ever witnessed, "Merciful Father, hear our prayers, and drive the evil spirits of vengeance and blood out of the hearts of these wicked men!"

"Amen!" said their father, "and rescue them from the strong temptations of the devil which are in them and upon them. Why do you not even pray to God—"

"—For strength to do it—we did, and we do," said John, interrupting him.

Father Roche looked at them, and there they stood, pale, silent, and with a smile upon their lips which filled him with a description of awe and fear that was new to him. Their father was little better; the perspiration stood on his brow, and as he looked at them, he at times began to doubt their very identity, and to believe that the whole interview might be a phantasma, or a hideous dream.

"You have sworn an oath," said the priest. "Rash and sinful men, you dared blasphemously to take, as it were, the Almighty into a league of blood! Do you not know that the creature you are about to slay is the work of your Creator, even as you are yourselves, and what power have you over his life? I see, I see," he added, "you have taken a sacrilegious oath of blood!"

"We have taken an oath of blood," said they, "and we will keep it."

"But is this just to your sister?" said the priest; "do you believe in the justice of an Almighty Providence? Is there no probability that, if this man lives, circumstances may come to light by which her fair and spotless character may be vindicated to the world? On the contrary, should you now take his life, you prevent any such possibility from ever happening; and your own rashness and ungodly crime, will be the means of sending her name down to posterity, foul and spotted with the imputation of woman's worst guilt. Is that love for your sister?"

Father Roche now began to see that he must argue with their passions—or with that strong affection for their sister, upon which these fearful passions were founded—rather than with their reason or their prejudices, which, in point of fact were now immovably set in the dark determination of crime.

"Do you forget," he added, "that there are laws in the country to pursue and overtake the murderer? Do you forget that you will die an ignominious death, and that, instead of acting an honorable part in life, as becomes your ancient and noble name, you will bequeath nothing to your parents but an inheritance of shame and infamy?"

"We have thought of all this before," said John.

"No, not all," said the youngest; "not all, but nearly."

"Well, nearly," said the other.

"Then," said the priest, "you will not hesitate to renounce your most foul and diabolical intention?"

"We have sworn it," said John, "and it

must be done." To this the others calmly assented.

"Well, then," said the earnest Christian, "since you fear neither disgrace, nor shame, nor the force of human laws, nor the dread of human punishment, you are not so hardened as to bid defiance to the Almighty, by whom you will be judged. Has he not said, 'thou shalt do no murder? and that whoso sheddeth blood, by man shall his blood be shed.' I now ask you," said he, "as one of the humblest of his accredited messengers, do you believe in God and fear him?"

"We are sworn," said John; "the blood of him who has dishonored our sister's name we will shed, and it is neither priest nor parent who will or shall prevent us."

"Is not a rash and unlawful oath a crime?" said Father Roche: "yes, and you know it is better broken than kept. I call upon you now, as your spiritual guide, to renounce that blasphemous oath of blood, and in the name of the Almighty and all powerful God, I command you to do it."

"We deny your right to interfere," replied John, "we are not now at confession—keep within your limits; for as sure as there is death and Judgment, so sure as we will fulfil our oath in avenging the disgrace of our sister. That ends all, and we will speak no more."

The good old man began to fear that he should be put to the most painful necessity of lodging informations before a magistrate, and thus become the means of bringing disgrace and evil upon the family when it occurred to him to ask them a last question.

"My dear young men," said he, "I have forgotten, in the agitation of mind occasioned by the unprecedented disclosure of your evil and wilful intentions, to ask, if you so far renounce God as to refuse to worship him. Kneel down, and let us pray." He himself and their father knelt, but the three brothers stood as sullen and immovable as before. The priest uttered a short prayer, but their conduct so completely perplexed and shocked him, that he rose up, and with tears in his eyes, exclaimed—

"I am now an old man, and have witnessed many instances of error, and sin, and deep crime, but never before have I seen in persons of your early years, such instances—such awful, terrible instances—of that impenitence in which the heart, setting aside God and his sacred ordinances, is given over to the hardness of final reprobation. I can do no more, as the ambassador of Christ, but I must not stand by and see a fellow-creature—oh! thank God," he exclaimed, "a thought recurs to my mind which had for a time passed out of it. My good friend," he said, addressing old M'Loughlin, "will you bring Mary in, if she is able to come—say I request to see her here."

"We will go now," said the eldest, "you can want *us* no longer."

"You shall *not* go," replied Father Roche firmly, "if you are men, stay—or, if cowards, who are afraid to look into the depths of your own dark designs, you will and may go—we want you not." This language perplexed them, but they stood as before, and moved not.

In a few minutes Mary came in, leaning on her father's arm; but, ah! what a change from the elegant outline and clear, healthy cheek—from the red plump lips, and dark mellow eyes, which carried fascination in every glance and grace in every motion! Sweet, and beautiful, and interesting, she still unquestionably was, but her pale cheek, languid eye, and low tremulous voice, told a tale, which, when the cause of it was reflected on, had literally scorched up out of her brother's hearts every remaining vestige of humanity.

"Mary," said the priest, "we have requested your presence, my child, for a most important purpose—and, in communicating that purpose to you, we indeed give the strongest proof of our confidence in your firmness and good sense—nay, I will add, in the truth and fervor of your dependence on the sustaining power of religion."

"In my own strength or discretion I will never depend more," she replied, sighing deeply.

"You must exert great courage and firmness now, then," rejoined Father Roche; "In the first place, you are about to have a disclosure made which will be apt to shock you; and, in the next place, I have only to say, that it is the absolute necessity of your knowing it, in order to prevent dreadful consequences from ensuing upon it, that forces us to make you cognizant of it at all."

"I trust I shall endeavor at least to bear it," she returned; "I am not strong, and I do not think that too much preparation will add to my strength."

"I agree with you, my child," said Father Roche, "and have only made such as I deemed indispensably necessary. The fact then is, my poor girl, that your brothers meditate violence against that most base and wicked person who—"

"I know, sir, the person to whom you allude; but I will thank you, if you can avoid it, not to name him."

"I have no such intention," replied the good man, "but bad and profligate as he is, it is still worse that your three brothers should propose such violence."

"But what do you mean by violence—of course violence of any description is beneath them. Surely, John, you would not stoop—"

She looked at them as she spoke, and, as before, there was no mistaking the meaning of the cold and deadly smile which lay upon their lips, and contrasted so strongly and strangely with their kindling eyes.

"What fearful expression is this," she asked, with evident terror and trepidation; "my dear brothers, what does this mean?—that is, if you be my brothers, for I can scarcely recognize you—what is it, in the name of heaven?"

The brothers looked at her, but spoke not, nor moved.

"They have taken an oath, Mary, to wipe out your shame in his blood," added the priest.

She immediately rose up without aid, and approached them.

"This is not true, my dear brothers," said she, "this cannot be true—deny it for your sister."

"We *cannot* deny it, Mary," said John, "for it *is* true, and *must* be done—our vengeance is ripe, hot, burning, and will wait no longer."

"John," said she, calmly, "recollect 'vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay it.'"

"I told them so," said their father, "but I receive no attention at their hands."

"Vengeance is *ours*," said John, in a deeper and more determined voice than he had ever uttered, "vengeance is ours, and *we* shall repay it."

The others repeated his words as before.

"Obstinate and unhappy young men," said the priest, "you know not, or you forget, that this is blasphemy."

"This, my dear sir," observed their sister, getting still more deadly pale than before, "is not blasphemy, it is insanity—my three brothers are insane; that is it. Relieve me, John," said she, recovering herself, "and say it is so."

"If we were insane, Mary," replied her brother, calmly, "our words would go for nothing."

"But, is it not a dreadful thing," she continued, "that I should be glad of such an alternative?"

"Mary," said the priest, "ask them to pray; they refused to join me and their father, perhaps you may be more successful."

"They will certainly pray," said she; "I never knew them to omit it a night, much less refuse it. Surely they will join their poor sister Mary, who will not long—" She hesitated from motives which the reader can understand, but immediately knelt down to prayer.

During prayer the three brothers stood and knelt not, neither did they speak. When prayers were concluded, she arose, and with tears in her eyes, approached her eldest brother.

"John," said she, "can it be that the brother of Mary M'Loughlin is an assassin? I will answer for you," she said. "Kiss me, for I am weak and feeble, and must go to bed."

"I cannot kiss you," he replied; "I can never kiss you more, Mary—for it must be done."

The tears still streamed copiously down her cheeks, as they did down those of her father and the amiable priest. The latter, who never took his eye off her, was praying incessantly, as might be seen by the motion of his lips.

"Alick," she proceeded, turning to her second brother, "surely won't refuse to kiss and embrace his only sister, before she withdraws for the day."

"I cannot kiss you, my pure sister; I can never kiss you more. We have sworn, and it must be done."

"I thought I had brothers," said she; "but I find I am now brotherless;—yet perhaps not altogether so. I had once a young, generous, innocent, and very affectionate playfellow. It was known that I loved *him*—that *we all* loved him *best*. Will he desert his loving sister, now that the world has done so? or will he allow her to kiss him, and to pray that the darkness of guilt may never overshadow his young and generous spirit. Bryan," she added, "I am Mary, your sister, whom you loved—and surely you are my own dearest brother."

Whilst she uttered the words, the tears which flowed from her eyes fell upon his face. He looked at her pale features, so full of love and tenderness—the muscles of his face worked strongly; but at length, with a loud cry, he threw himself over, caught her in his arms, and laying her head upon his bosom, wept aloud. The evil spell was now broken. Neither John nor Alick could resist the contagion of tenderness which their beloved sister shed into their hearts. Their tears flowed fast—their caresses were added to those of Brian; and as they penitently embraced her, they retracted their awful oath, and promised never again to think of violence, revenge, or bloodshed.

Thus did the force and purity of domestic affection charm back into their hearts the very spirit which its own excess had before driven out of it;—and thus it is that many a triumph over crime is won by the tenderness

and strength of that affection, when neither reason, nor religion, nor any other principle that we are acquainted with, can succeed in leading captive the fearful purposes of resentment and revenge.

"Now," said Father Roche, "we have still a duty to perform, and that is, to return thanks to Almighty God for the dark and deadly crime, and the woeful sorrow, which, by his grace and mercy, he has averted from this family; and I think we may take this blessing—for such surely it is—as an earnest hope that the same Divine hand, which has put aside this impending calamity from us, may, and will, in his own good time, remove the other afflictions which the enmity and wickedness of evil hearts, and evil councils have brought upon us; but especially let us kneel and return thanks for the great and happy change which, through the humility and affection of one of us, has been wrought upon the rest."

He then knelt down, and on this occasion the iron sinews of these young men became soft, and were bent in remorse, sorrow, repentance. The pious priest prayed fervently and humbly, and as his tears fell fast, in the trusting sincerity of his heart and the meek earnestness of his spirit, it is almost unnecessary to say, that those of his little flock accompanied him. The brothers wept bitterly, for the rocky heart of each had been touched, and religion completed the triumph which affection had begun.

Such had been the situation of this family on the day alluded to by Mr. Easel, who could not, of course, have had any means of becoming acquainted with them, but as we felt that the incidents were necessary to give fulness to his narrative, we did not hesitate to introduce them here, where a knowledge of them was so necessary. We now allow Mr. Easel himself to resume his narrative.

"This venerable pastor," continues Mr. Easel, "is a thin, pale man, but, evidently, in consequence of temperance and moderation in his general habits of living, a healthy one. He cannot be less than seventy, but the singular clearness of his complexion, and the steady lustre of his gray eye, lead you to suppose that he is scarcely that. He is tall and without stoop, and, from the intellectual character of his high and benevolent forehead, added to the mildness of his other features, and his whole face, he presented, I must say, a very striking combination of dignity and meekness. His dress is plain, and nothing can be more fine and impressive than the contrast between his simple black apparel, and the long flowing snow-white hair which falls over it. His holy zeal as a Christian minister, unobscured by secular feelings, or an unbecoming participation in the angry turmoils of political life, possessed all the simple beauty of pure and primitive piety. Father Roche received his education on the Continent, in several parts of which he has held ecclesiastical appointments, one being the Presidency of an Irish College. He consequently speaks most, if not all, of the continental languages; but so utterly free from display, and so simple are his manners, that you would not on a first interview, no, nor on a second, ever suppose the man to be what he is—a most accomplished scholar and divine. In one thing, however, you never could be mistaken—that his manners, with all their simplicity, are those of a gentleman, possessing as they do, all the ease, and, when he chooses, the elegance of a man who has moved in high and polished society. He has only been a few years in Ireland. After a glass of wine and some desultory conversation touching public events and the state of this unfortunate and unsettled country, upon all of which he spoke with singular good temper and moderation, we went to see the manufactory, now that I had recovered from my fatigue. This building is two or three hundred yards from the house, and as we were on our way there, it so happened that he and I found ourselves together, and at some distance from M'Loughlin and his sons.

"'You were introduced, sir,' said he, 'to me as Mr. Easel.'

"I bowed.

"'I am not inquisitive,' he added with a smile, 'because in this case I do not find it necessary; but I am candid.'

"I began to feel slightly uneasy, so I only bowed again, but could say nothing.

"'I have met you on the continent.'

"'It is quite possible,' I replied, 'I have been there.'

"He laid his finger on my shoulder, and added still with a gentle and significant smile, 'I am in possession of your secret, and I say so, to take you merely as far as I am concerned, out of a false, and myself out of a somewhat painful position. It would be embarrassing to me, for instance, to meet and treat you as that which you are not, knowing as I do what you are; and it will relieve you from the difficulty of sustaining a part that is not your own, at least so far as I am concerned.'

"'I certainly perceive,' I replied, 'that you are in possession of that, which in this country, I thought known only to myself and another.'

"'Your secret,' he said emphatically, 'shall be inviolable.'

"'I feel it, my good sir,' I replied, 'and

now, let me ask, on what part of the continent did we meet?'

"Let it suffice to say here, that he brought himself distinctly to my memory, through the medium of a very kind office performed for a friend of mine, who, at the time, stood in circumstances not only of difficulty, but of considerable personal danger.

"Having viewed the manufactory, which is somewhat of a novelty in this immediate locality, we were about to take our leave, when four men, evidently strangers, and each remarkable for that hardened and insolent look which begets suspicion at a glance, now entered the concern with an air of ruffian authority, and with all the offensive forms of which the law is capable, laid on an execution, to the amout of fourteen hundred pounds.

"Old M'Loughlin received the intelligence, and witnessed the proceedings, with a smile, in which there was something that struck me as being peculiarly manly and independent.

"'This,' said he, 'although coming from a quarter that I deemed to be friendly, is the heaviest blow, connected with our business, that we have received yet. Still, gentlemen,' he proceeded, addressing Father Roche and myself, 'I trust it won't signify—a mere passing embarrassment. This manufactory, as you may perceive, complete through all its machinery, which is of the very best and costliest description, together with the property in it, is worth five times the amount of the execution.'

"'Yes, but you forget,' replied the leading ruffian, 'that property under an execution isn't to be judged by its real value. In general it doesn't bring one-tenth, no, nor one-fifteenth of its true value, when auctioned out, as it will be, under a writ.'

"'Ay, by Jabers,' said another of them, 'an' what's better still, you forget that your lease is expired, and that Lord Cumber has sent over word for you not to get a renewal—nor Harman either.'

"'Is this true?' I inquired of Father Roche; 'do you imagine it to be possible?'

"'That fellow is bad authority for anything,' he replied, 'but I fear that in this point, he is too correct. However, let us ask M'Loughlin himself, who, certainly, has the best right to know.'

"This I resolved on, not because I was ignorant of the fact, which you know I had from M'Clutchy himself, but that I might ascertain that gentleman's mode of transacting business, and his fairness towards Lord Cumber's tenants.

"'What this man says, Mr. M'Loughlin, surely cannot be possible—does he mean to assert that Lord Cumber refused to renew your lease, although he must be aware that you have expended in the erection of this fine manufactory a sum not less, I should suppose, than five or six thousand pounds.'

"'Seven thousand six hundred,' replied the old man, setting me right, 'nearly four thousand between Harman and us.'

"'But he does not refuse to renew your leases certainly?'

"'No,' said M'Loughlin, 'I cannot say that he does; but we have not been able to get anything like a distinct reply from him on the subject—and, as far as reports go, they are certainly not in our favor. We have written to Lord Cumber himself, and the only reply we could obtain was, that he had placed the whole matter in the hands of M'Clutchy, in whose justice and integrity, he said, he had the highest confidence, and that consequently we must abide by his decision. My own impression is, that he is determined to ruin us, which he certainly will, should he refuse us a renewal.'

"'There can be no doubt about it,' said the eldest son, 'nor that his management of the estate and his general administration of justice are woefully one-sided.'

"'I don't choose to hear Mr. M'Clutchy abused,' said the leading fellow, who, in truth, was one of his blood-hounds, as were all the rest, with one exception only, 'nor I won't hear him abused. You wouldn't have him show the same favor to Papists that he would show to good, honest Protestants, that are staunch and loyal to Church and State—by Jabers, that would be nice work! Do you think a man's not to show favor to his own side, either as a magistrate or agent?—faith that's good!'

"'And I'll tell you more,' said another of them, addressing John M'Loughlin, 'do you think, that if he dared to put Papishes on a level with us, that we'd suffer it? By Gog, you're out of it if you do—we know a horse of another color, my buck.'

"'To whom do you address such insolent language as this?' asked the young man, 'you are here in execution of your duty, and you had better confine yourself to that.'

"'To you, my buck, I address it, and to any Papish that doesn't like it—and if I'm here to discharge my duty, I'll discharge it,' and he shook his head with insolence as he spoke; 'an' what's more, I'm afeard of no man—and I'll discharge my duty as I like, that's another thing—as I like to discharge it. Ha! d—n me, I'm not to be put down by a parcel of Priests and Papishes, if they were ten times as bad as they are.'

"'You are a low ruffian,' replied the young man, 'far beneath my resentment or

my notice; and it is precisely such scoundrels as you, ignorant and brutal, who bring shame and infamy upon religion itself—and are a multiplied curse to the country.'

"'Very well,' my buck,' persisted this ferocious bigot, 'may be the day will come when we'll make you remember this traison, and swally it too. How would you like to get a touch of the wreckers, my buck?—an' by Jabers, take care that you're not in for a lick. A lease! d—n me but it would be a nice thing to give the like o' you a lease! None o' your sort, my buck, will get that trick, so long as loyal M'Clutchy's on the property.'

"Father Roche having taken the young man's arm, led him away; wishing to avoid any further altercation with such persons, and immediately afterwards they set about completing an inventory of all the property, machinery, etc., in the establishment.

"'There was one expression used by that man,' I observed, when we got out again upon the Castle Cumber road, 'which I do not properly understand; it was, 'how should you like to get a touch of the *wreckers?*'

"'The wreckers, sir,' replied old M'Loughlin, 'are a set of men such as that fellow we have just been speaking to—brimful of venom and hatred against Catholics and their religion. Their creed consists of two principles, one of which I have just mentioned, that is, hatred of us; the other is a blind attachment to the Orange system. These two combined, constitute a loyalist of the present day; and with such impressions operating upon a large mass of men like the fellow inside, who belong to an ascendant party, and are permitted to carry arms and ammunition wherever they like, either to search your house or mine, on the most frivolous pretences, it is not surprising that the country should be as it is; but *it is* surprising, that exposed as we are to such men, without adequate protection, we should possess any attachment at all to the throne and constitution of these realms; or to a government which not only suffers such a state of things to exist, but either connives at or encourages it. For instance, it was the exhibition of such principles as you have heard that man avow, that got him and those who accompany him their appointments; for, I am sorry to say, that there is no such successful recommendation as this violent party spirit, even to situations of the very lowest class. The highest are generally held by Orangemen, and it is attachment to their system that constitutes the only passport now-a-days to every office in the country, from the secretary to the scavenger.'

"This, I fear, is rather an overtrue account of the state of things in the portion of Ireland from which I write; but, whilst I admit this, I am far from saying that the faults are all on one side. There are prejudices equally ferocious, and quite as senseless and ignorant, on the part of the Roman Catholic party—prejudices resulting sometimes from education, and sometimes from the want of it; but, which certainly contribute their full share to the almost disorganized state of society by which I am surrounded."

From the same to the same in continuation.

"May 10, 18—. My dear Spinageberd—Feeling, as I did, exceedingly anxious to make myself acquainted with the true principles of the Orange institutions which have spread themselves so rapidly over the country, I need scarcely say to you that I left nothing that was fair and honorable undone, on my part, to accomplish that object; or, in other words, to ascertain whether their private principles, as a political body, harmonize with their public practices. It is but fair to render justice to every party, and consequently it is only right and equitable to inquire whether the violent outrages committed by the low and ignorant men who belong to their body, are defensible by the regulations which are laid down for their guidance.

"On looking over the general declaration of the objects of the institution, one is certainly struck by the fairness, and liberality, and moderation, joined to a becoming avowal of attachment to the Protestant religion and the throne, which it breathes. Here, however, it is, *verbatim et literatim*, in its authentic shape, with all that is good or evil in it laid clearly before you. I deem it right, however, to preface it by the greater portion of a short but significant Report, to which are prefixed the following memorable names:—

"'At a meeting of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, November 29, 1798. Present:—Thomas Verner, Grand Master; J. C. Beresford, grand secretary; R. C. Smith, jun., deputy secretary; H. A. Woodward; J. S. Rochfort; T. F. Knipe; Samuel Montgomery; Harding Giffard; William Richardson; John Fisher; William Corbett; W. G. Galway; Francis Gregory. Harding Giffard and S. Montgomery, Esqrs., reported as follows:—

"'Having been honored by the Grand Lodge with instructions to revise and select a proper system of rules, for the government of Orange Lodges, we beg leave to make a report of our progress.

"'We are happy in being able to say, that

in our duty upon this occasion, we received the greatest assistance from the experience of the Grand Master of Ireland, and his Deputy Grand Secretary, who did us the honor of imparting to us their sentiments.

"'Encouraged by their help, we have ventured very materially to alter the shape of the confused system which was referred to us, preserving the spirit, and, as much as possible, the original words, except where we had to encounter gross violations of language and grammar.

"'The general plan of our proceeding has been this, we have thrown what are, in our opinion, very improperly called the six first general rules, into one plain short declaration of the sentiments of the body.

"'Next in order we have given the qualifications of an Orangeman, selected from the Antrim regulations, and the rather, as it breathes a spirit of piety which cannot be too generally diffused throughout an institution, *whose chief object*, whatever political shape it may assume, *is to preserve the Protestant Religion.* * * * * * *

"'SAMUEL MONTGOMERY,
"'HENRY GIFFARD.

"'Nov. 20, 1798."

GENERAL DECLARATION OF THE OBJECTS OF THE ORANGE INSTITUTION.

"'We associate, to the utmost of our power, to support and defend his Majesty King George the Third, the constitution and laws of this country, and the succession to the Throne in his Majesty's illustrious house, being Protestants; for the defence of our persons and properties; and to maintain the peace of the country; *and for these purposes we will be at all times ready to assist the civil and military powers in the just and lawful discharge of their duty.* We also associate in honor of King William the Third, Prince of Orange, whose name we bear, as supporters of his glorious memory, and the true religion by him completely established in these kingdoms. And in order to prove our gratitude and affection for his name, we will annually celebrate the victory over James at the Boyne, on the first day of July, O. S., in every year, which day shall be our grand Era for ever.

"'We further declare that we are exclusively a Protestant Association; yet, detesting as we do, any intolerant spirit, we solemnly pledge ourselves to each other, *that we will not persecute, injure, or upbraid any person on account of his religious opinions,* PROVIDED THE SAME BE NOT HOSTILE TO THE STATE; but that we will, on the contrary, be aiding and assisting to every loyal subject, of every religious description, in protecting him from violence and oppression.

Qualifications requisite for an Orangeman.

"'He should have a sincere love and veneration for his Almighty Maker, productive of those lively and happy fruits, righteousness and obedience to his commands; a firm and steadfast faith in the Saviour of the world, convinced that he is the only mediator between a sinful creature and an offended Creator — without these he cannot be a Christian; of a humane and compassionate disposition, and a courteous and affable behavior. He should be an utter enemy to savage brutality and unchristian cruelty; a lover of society and improving company; and have a laudable regard for the Protestant religion, and a sincere desire to propagate its precepts; zealous in promoting the honor, happiness, and prosperity of his king and country; heartily desirous of victory and success in those pursuits, yet convinced and assured that God alone can grant them. He should have a hatred of cursing and swearing, and taking the name of God in vain (a shameful practice), and he should use all opportunities of discouraging it among his brethren. Wisdom and prudence should guide his actions—honesty and integrity direct his conduct—and the honor and glory of his king and country be the motives of his endeavors—lastly, he should pay the strictest attention to a religious observance of the Sabbath, and also to temperance and sobriety.

Obligation of an Orangeman.

"I, A. B., do solemnly and sincerely swear, of my own free will and accord, that I will, to the utmost of my power, support and defend the present king, George III., his heirs and successors, so long as he or they support the Protestant ascendancy, the constitution, and laws of these kingdoms; and that I will ever hold sacred the name of our glorious deliverer, William III., prince of Orange; and I do further swear, that I am not, nor ever was, a Roman Catholic or Papist; that I was not, am not, nor ever will be, a United Irishman, and that I never took the oath of secrecy to that, or any other treasonable society; and I do further swear, in the presence of Almighty God, that I will always conceal, and never will reveal, either part or parts of what is now to be privately communicated to me, until I shall be authorized so to do by the proper authorities of the Orange institution; that I will neither write it, nor indite it, stamp, stain, or engrave it,

nor cause it so to be done, on paper, parchment, leaf, bark, stick, or stone, or anything, so that it may be known; and I do further swear, that I have not, to my knowledge or belief, been proposed and rejected in, or expelled from any other Orange Lodge; and that I now become an Orangeman without fear, bribery, or corruption.

"'SO HELP ME GOD.'

Secret Articles.

"'1st. That we will bear true allegiance to his majesty, king George III., his heirs and successors, so long as he or they support the Protestant ascendancy; and that we will faithfully support and maintain the laws and constitution of these kingdoms.

"'2d That we will be true to all Orangemen in all just actions, neither wronging one, nor seeing him wronged to our knowledge, without acquainting him thereof.

"'3d. That we are not to see a brother offended for sixpence or one shilling, or more, if convenient, which must be returned next meeting if possible.

"'4th. We must not give the first assault to any person whatever; *that* may bring a brother into trouble.

"'5th. We are not to carry away money, goods, or anything from any person whatever, except arms and ammunition, and those only from an enemy.

"'6th. We are to appear in ten hours' warning, or whatever time is required, if possible (provided it is not hurtful to ourselves or families, and that we are served with a lawful summons from the master), otherwise we are fined as the company think proper.

"'7th. No man can be made an Orangeman without the unanimous approbation of the body.

"'8th. An Orangeman is to keep a brother's secrets as his own, unless in case of murder, treason, and perjury; and that of his own free will.

"'9th. No Roman Catholic can be admitted on any account.

"'10th. Any Orangeman who acts contrary to these rules shall be expelled, and the same reported to all the Lodges in the kingdom and elsewhere.

"'GOD SAVE THE KING.'

"Among the Secret Articles are the following, which, by the way, are pretty significant, when properly understood:—

"'4th—We must not give the first assault to any person whatever; that might bring a brother into trouble.'

"'5th—We are not to carry away *money, goods*, or anything from any person whatever, except *arms and ammunition*, and those only from an *enemy*.'

"'6th—We are to appear in ten hours' warning, or whatever time is required, if possible, (provided it is not hurtful to ourselves or families, and that we are served with a lawful summons from the master), otherwise we are fined as *the company* think proper.'

"The Marksman's obligation is merely a repetition of the same description of allegiance to the king, his heirs, and successors, so long as he or they maintain the Protestant ascendancy, &c., &c., together with such other obligations of secrecy as are to be found either in Orange or Ribbon Lodges, with very slight difference in their form and expression.

"Now, my dear Spinageberd, I first call your attention to that portion which is headed 'Qualifications necessary for an Orangeman;' and I think you will agree with me that it would be difficult, almost impossible, to find in any organized society, whether open or secret, a more formidable code of qualifications for such as may be anxious to enroll themselves amongst its members. And I have no doubt, that had the other portions of it been conceived and acted on in the same spirit, Orangeism would have become a very different system from that which under its name now influences the principles, and inflames the passions of the lower classes of Protestants, and stimulates them too frequently to violence, and outrage, and persecution itself, under a conviction that they are only discharging their duties by a faithful adherence to its obligations. These obligations, however, admirable as they are and ably drawn up, possess neither power nor influence in the system, being nothing more nor less than an abstract series of religious and moral duties *recommended* to practice, but stript of any force of obligation that might impress them on the heart and principles. They are not embodied at all in the code in any shape or form that might touch the conscience or regulate the conduct, but on the contrary, stand there as a thing to look at and admire, but not as a matter of duty. If they had been even drawn up as a solemn declaration, asserting on the part of the newly made member, a conviction that strict observance of their precepts was an indispensable and necessary part of his obligations as an Orangeman, they might have been productive of good effect, and raised the practices of the institution from many of the low and gross atrocities which disgraced it. I cannot deny, however, that Orangeism, with all its crimes and outrages, has rendered very

important services to the political Protestantism of the country. In fact, it was produced at the period of its formation by the almost utter absence of spiritual religion in the Established Church. Some principle was necessary to keep Protestantism from falling to pieces, and as a good one could not be found in a church which is at this moment one mass of sordid and selfish secularity,* there was nothing left for it but a combination such as this. Indeed, you could form no conception of the state of the *Protestant Church* here, even while I write, although you might form a very gorgeous one of *the Establishment.* The truth is she is *all* Establishment and *no* Church; and is, to quote Swift's celebrated simile—

> "Like a fat corpse upon a bed,
> That rots and stinks in state."

"There was no purifying or restraining power in the Establishment to modify, improve, or elevate the principles of Orangeism at all. And what has been the consequence? Why, that in attempting to infuse her spirit into the new system she was overmatched herself, and instead of making Orangeism Christian, the institution has made her Orange. This is fact. The only thing we have here now in the shape of a Church is the Orange system, for if you take that away what remains?

"This, my dear Spinageberd, is not to be wondered at; for no effects are without their causes. In this country nobody ever dreams of entering the Established Church from pure and pious motives. In such a Church piety may be corrupted, but it is seldom rewarded. No, the description of persons who now enter the Church are the younger sons of our nobility and gentry, of our squires, our dignitaries, and wealthy professional men; of our judges, generals, our deans, and our bishops. Among the sons of such men the Church is carved out, with the exception of the chines, and sirloins, and other *best joints*, all of which are devoured by a peculiar description of Englishmen, named Bishops, who are remarkable for excessively long claws and very shark-like teeth. In this, however, we do not blame England, but agree with Dean Swift who asserted, that in his day, she uniformly selected the most unassuming, learned and pious individuals she could get; fitted them out as became such excellent Christian men, and sent them over with the best intentions imaginable, to instruct the Irish in all Christian truth and humility. It so happened, however, that as soon as they had reached Hounslow Heath, they were every man, without exception, stopped, stripped, and robbed, by the gentlemen who frequent that celebrated locality; who, thinking that robbery on the high Church was safer and more lucrative than robbery upon the highway, came over here instead of pious men, where they remained in their original capacity for the remainder of their lives.

"It is impossible, in fact, that a Church so deeply infected with political corruption, so shamefully neglected in all that is spiritual and regenerative, and so openly prostituted to intrigue and ambition, can ever work with that high and holy efficacy which should characterize her. These, however, are not her purposes, nor are they aimed at. She exists here merely as an unholy bond between the political interests of the two countries, maintaining British authority by her wealth, and corrupting Irish honesty by her example. I have already enumerated the class of persons who enter her, and touched upon the motives by which they are influenced. In large families, for instance, if there happen to be a young fellow either too idle, or too stupid for the labor and duties of the other professions, there is no inconvenience or regret felt. No matter—he Dick, or Jack, or Tom, as the case may be, *will do very well for the Church.* 'You will make a very good parson, Tom—or a Dean—or a——no hang it, there I must stop, I was about to say Bishop, but not being an Englishman, you cannot carve that dish, Dick. Never mind—you can feed upon a fat living—or if one won't do—why, we must see and get you a pair of them, Bill.'

"But this, my dear Spinageberd, is not all. You will be surprised, when I tell you, that there is no system of education necessary for entering into orders. No system, I repeat—properly so called—either Scriptural or Ecclesiastical. Some few divinity lectures are to be attended, which in general are neither well attended—nor worth attending—and that, I believe, is all. One thing is certain, that the getting certificates of attendance for these lectures is a mere form, as is the examination for orders. The consequence is, that a young candidate for a living goes into the Church burthened with very little of that lore which might spoil his appetite for its enjoyment; so harmoniously does everything here work together for the good of the pastors at the expense of the people.

"I think I have shown you that there is little in the Church of Ireland that is likely

* Let the reader remember that this, and almost everything that refers to the Irish Establishment, is supposed to have been written about forty years ago.

to regulate or purify the spirit of Orangeism when coming in contact with itself. That it had little to gain from the Church in a spiritual way, and that the Church is not fulfilling the ends of her establishment here in any sense, is evident from the Report in the little work from which I have taken these extracts. In that passage it would appear that the very existence of a Church is forgotten altogether; for Orangeism is termed 'an institution, whose chief object—whatever political shape it may assume—is *to preserve the* Protestant religion.' I will now, before I close this batch, direct your attention to one or two passages that prove most distinctly the fact, that there stand clear in this oath of an Orangeman, principles, founded on foregone practices and conclusions, which never should have existence in a country so situated as this is.

"The Orangemen, for instance, in the paper headed their 'General Declaration,' say, 'We associate for the defence of our persons and properties, and to maintain the peace of the country; and for these purposes we will be at all times ready to *assist* the *civil and military powers* in the just and lawful discharge of their duty.'

"This, now, is all very plausible, but, perhaps, by looking a little more closely into the circumstances of the case, we may be able to perceive that in this passage, and one or two others of a similar character, the most objectionable part of the system lies disguised—if one can say disguised, because to me, my dear Spinageberd, the matter seems obvious enough. Who, then, are these men that come forward with arms in their hands, to proffer aid to the civil and military powers in the discharge of their duty? A self-constituted body without authority, who have certainly proved themselves to be brave men, and rendered most important services to the state, at a time when such services were, no doubt, both necessary and acceptable. The crisis, however, in which this aid was given and received, being but of brief duration, soon passed away, leaving the party opposed to government—the rebels—broken, punished, flogged, banished, hanged; in fact, completely discomfited, subdued, beaten down. In other words, the rebellion of '98 having been thoroughly suppressed, this self-elected body of men, tasting the sweets of authority, retain, under different circumstances, these obligations, which, we admit, the previous situation of the country had rendered necessary. They retain them in times of peace, and bring into operation against men who were no longer either in a disposition or capacity to resist, those strong prejudices and that fierce spirit which originated in tumult and civil war. Why, nobody complains of the conduct of Orangemen, as a body, in '98; it is of their outrages since, that the country, and such as were opposed to them, have a right to complain.

"In another passage the declaration is still stronger and more significant: 'We further declare,' say they, 'that we are exclusively a Protestant association; yet, detesting as we do, any intolerant spirit, we solemnly pledge ourselves to each other, that we will not *persecute, injure*, nor *upbraid* any person on account of his religious opinions, *provided the same be not hostile to the state.*'

"That is to say, they *will* persecute, injure, or upbraid such persons only whose religious opinions *are* hostile to the state. But, now, let me ask any man of common sense, if he could for a moment hesitate to declare on oath what religion they have alluded to as being hostile to the state? There is, in truth, but one answer to be given—the Roman Catholic. What else, then, is this excessive loyalty to the state but a clause of justification for their own excesses, committed in the name, and on the behalf of religion itself? Did they not also constitute themselves the judges who were first to determine the nature of these opinions, and afterwards the authorities who should punish them? Here is one triumphant party with arms in their hand, who have only, if they wish, to mark out a victim, and declare his religion and principles as hostile to the state; and, lo! they are at liberty, by their own regulations, to '*persecute*' him!

"In the 5th secret article there occurs the following:—'We are not to carry away money, goods, or anything, from any person whatever, except arms and ammunition, and these only from *an enemy*.'

"This certainly shows the nature of the cruel and domiciliary tyranny which they, subsequently to '98, carried to such excess in different parts of the country; and here, as in the other instance, what was there to guide them in determining the crime which constituted an enemy? Why, their own fierce prejudices alone. Here, then, we find a body irresponsible and self-constituted, confederated together, and trained in the use of arms (but literally unknown to the constitution), sitting, without any legal authority upon the religious opinions of a class that are hateful and obnoxious to them—and, in fact, combining within themselves the united offices of both judge and executioner. With the character of their loyalty I have no quarrel; I perceive it is conditional; but the doctrine of unconditional loyalty is so slavish and absurd, that the sooner such an

necessary fetterlock is struck off the mind the better. To-morrow evening, however, I am to be introduced to an Orange Lodge, after the actual business of it shall have been transacted and closed. This is a privilege not conceded to many, but it is one of which I shall very gladly avail myself, in order that I may infer from their conduct some faint conception of what it generally is."

CHAPTER XIX.

An Orange Lodge at Full Work—Solomon in all his Glory—He Defines Drinking to be a Religious Exercise—True Blue and the Equivocal—Phil's Eloquence—A Charter Toast.

From the same to the same.

"Friday, * * *

"THE order of business for each night of meeting is, I find, as follows:—1. Lodge to open with prayer, members standing. 2. General rules read. 3. Members proposed. 4. Reports from committee. 5. Names of members called over. 6. Members balloted for. 7. Members made. 8. Lodge to close with prayer, members standing.

"It was about eight o'clock, when, accompanied by a young fellow named Graham, we reached the Lodge, which, in violation of one of its own rules, was held in what was formerly called the Topertoe Tavern, but which has since been changed to the Castle Cumber Arms—being a field *per pale*, on which is quartered a purse, and what seems to be an inverted utensil of lead, hammered into a coronet. In the other is a large mouth, grinning, opposite to which is a stuffed pocket, from which hangs the motto, 'ne quid detrimenti res privata capiat.' Under the foot of the gentleman is the neck of a famine-struck woman, surrounded by naked and starving children, and it is by the convenient aid of her neck that he is enabled to reach the purse, *or;* and, indeed, such is his eagerness to catch it and the coronet, that he does not seem to care much whether he strangles her or not. On the leaden coronet is the motto, alluding to the head which fills it, '*similis simili gaudet.*'

I should mention, before proceeding further, that Mr. Valentine M'Clutchy, being master of the Lodge in question, was the individual from whom I had received permission to be present under the circumstances already specified. The ceremony of making a member is involved in that ridiculous mystery which is calculated to meet the vulgar prejudices of low and ignorant men. Sometimes they are made one by one, and occasionally, or, I believe, more frequently in batches of three or more, in order to save time and heighten the effect. The novice, then, before entering the Lodge, is taken into another room, where he is blindfolded, and desired to denude himself of his shoes and stockings, his right arm is then taken out of his coat and shirt sleeves, in order to leave his right shoulder bare. He then enters the Lodge, where he is received in silence with the exception of the master, who puts certain queries to him, which must be appropriately answered. After this he receives on the naked shoulder three smart slaps of the open hand, as a proof of his willingness to bear every kind of persecution for the sake of truth—of his steadfastness to the principles of Orangeism, and of his actual determination to bear violence, and, if necessary, death itself, rather than abandon it or betray his brethren.

"About nine o'clock the business of the Lodge had been despatched, and in a few minutes I received an intimation to enter from the Deputy Master, who was no other than the redoubtable and heroic Phil himself; the father having been prevented from coming, it appeared, by sudden indisposition. As I entered, they were all seated, to the number of thirty-five or forty, about a long table, from which rose, reeking and warm, the powerful exhalations of strong punch. On paying my respects, I was received and presented to them by Phil, who on this occasion, was in great feather, being rigged out in all the paraphernalia of Deputy Master. The rest, also, were dressed in their orange robes, which certainly gave them a good deal of imposing effect.

"'Gentlemen,' said Phil,—'Bob Sparrow, I'll trouble you to touch the bell, and be d—d to you—gentlemen, this is a particular friend of mine and my father's—that is, we intend to make a good deal of interest in him, if it's not his own fault, and to push him on in a way that may serve him—but, then, he's in the dark yet; however, I hope he won't be long so. This, gentlemen, is Mr. Weasel from England, who has come over to see the country.'

"'Your health, Mr. Weasel,' resounded from all sides, 'you're welcome among us, and so is every friend of brother Captain Phil's.'

"'Gentlemen,' said I, 'I feel much obliged for the cordiality of your reception—but, allow me to say, that Mr. M'Clutchy has made a slight mistake in my name, which is Easel, not Weasel.'

"'Never mind, sir,' they replied, among a jingle of glasses, which almost prevented me

from being heard, 'never mind, Mr. Evil, we don't care a curse what your name is, provided you're a good Protestant. Your name may be Belzebub, instead of Evil, or Devil, for that matter—all we want to know is, whether you're *staunch* and of the *right metal.*'

"'That, gentlemen,' I replied, 'I trust time will tell.'

"'I shall be very proud—I speak it not, I hope, in a worldly sense,' said a little thin man dressed in black—'no, not in a worldly sense I shall be proud, sir, of your acquaintance. To me it is quite sufficient that you are here as the friend of *my* excellent friend, Mr. Valentine M'Clutchy; a man, I trust, not without a deep and searching spirit of——'

"'Come, Solomon,' said a large, broad-shouldered man, with a face in which were singularly blended the almost incompatible principles of fun and ferocity, 'Come, Solomon, none of your preaching here so soon—you know you're not up to the praying point yet, nor within four tumblers of it. So, as you say yourself, wait for your gifts, my lad.'

"'Ah, Tom,' replied Solomon with a smile, 'always facetious—always fond of a harmless and edifying jest.'

"'My name, sir,' added he, 'is M'Slime; I have the honor to be Law Agent to the Castle Cumber property, and occasionally to transact business with our friend M'Clutchy.'

"Here the waiter entered with a glass and tumbler, and Phil desired them to shove me up the decanter. This, however, I declined, as not being yet sufficiently accustomed to whiskey punch to be able to drink it without indisposition. I begged, however, to be allowed to substitute a little cold sherry and water in its stead.

"'I'm afeard, sir,' observed another strong-looking man, 'that you are likely to prove a cool Orangeman on our hands. I never saw the man that shied his tumbler good for much.'

"'Sir,' said Solomon, 'you need not feel surprised at the tone of voice and familiarity in which these persons address you or me. They are, so to speak, sturdy and independent men, who, to the natural boldness of their character, add on such occasions as this, something of the equality and license that are necessarily to be found in an Orange Lodge. I am myself here, I trust, on different and higher principles. Indeed it is from a purely religious motive that I come, as well as to give them the benefit of a frail, but not, I would hope, altogether unedifying example. Their language makes me often feel how much I stand in need of grace, and how good it is sometimes for me to be tempted within my strength. I also drink punch here, lest by declining it I might get into too strong a feeling of pride, in probably possessing greater gifts; and I need not say, sir, that a watchful Christian will be slow to miss any opportunity of keeping himself humble. It is, then, for this purpose that I sometimes, when among these men, make myself even as one of them, and humble myself, always with an eye to edification even to the fourth or fifth cup.'

"'But I trust, sir, that these Christian descents from your vantage ground are generally rewarded.'

"'Without boasting, I trust I may say so. These little sacrifices of mine are not without their own appropriate compensations. Indeed, it is seldom that such stretches of duty on the right side, and for the improvement of others, are made altogether in vain. For instance, after the humility—if I can call it so—of the third cup, I am rewarded with an easy uprising of the spiritual man—a greater sense of inward freedom—an elevation of the soul—a benign beatitude of spirit, that diffuses a calm, serene happiness through my whole being.'

"'That, sir, must be delightful.'

"'It *is* delightful, but it is what these men—carnal I do not wish to call them lest I fall—it is, however, what these men—or, indeed, any merely carnal man, cannot feel. This, however, I feel to be a communication made to me, that in this thing I should not for the time stop; and I feel that I am not free to pass the fourth or fifth cup, knowing as how greater freedom and additional privileges will be granted.'

"'Are the stages marked, sir, between the fourth and fifth tumblers?'

"'Cups, my friend—there is a beauty, sir, in the economy of this that is not to be concealed. For instance, the line between the third and fourth cups is much better marked, and no doubt for wiser purposes, than is that between the fourth and fifth. At the fourth my spirit is filled with strong devotional tendencies—and it is given to me to address the Lodge with something like unctional effect; but at the fifth this ecstatic spirit rises still higher, and assumes the form of praise, and psalms, spiritual songs, and political anthems. In this whole assembly, I am sorry to say, that there is but one other humble individual who, if I may so speak, is similarly gifted, and goes along with me, *pari passu*, as they say, step by step, and cup by cup, until we reach the highest order, which is praise. But, indeed, to persons so gifted in their liquor, drinking is decidedly a religious exercise. That person is the little fellow to the right of the red-faced man up yonder, the little fellow I mean, who is pale in the face and wants an eye. His name

is Bob Spaight; he is grand cobbler, by appointment, to the Lodge, and attends all the Popish executions in the province, from principle; for he is, between you and me, a Christian man of high privileges. As for our little touches of melodia sacra during the fifth cup, the only drawback is, that no matter what the measure of the psalm be, whether long or short, Bob is sure to sing it either to the tune of Croppies lie Down, or the Boyne Water, they being the only two he can manage; a circumstance which forces us, however otherwise united, to part company in the melody, unless when moved by compassion for poor Bob, I occasionally join him in Croppies lie Down or the other tune, for the purpose of sustaining him as a Christian and Orangeman.'

"At this time it was with something like effort that he or I could hear each other as we spoke, and by the way, it was quite evident that little Solomon was very nearly in all his glory, from the very slight liquefaction of language which might be observed in his conversation.

"It occurred to me now, that as Solomon's heart was a little bit open, and as the tide of conversation flowed both loud and tumultuous, it was a very good opportunity of getting out of him a tolerably fair account of the persons by whom we were surrounded. I accordingly asked him the name and occupation of several whom I had observed as the most striking individuals present.

"'That large man with the red face,' said I, 'beside your pious and musical friend Spaight—who is he?'

"'He is an Orange butcher, sir, who would think very little of giving a knock on the head to any Protestant who won't deal with him. His landlord's tenants are about half Catholics and half Protestants, and as he makes it a point to leave them his custom in about equal degrees, this fellow—who, between you and me—is right in the principle, if he would only carry it out a little more quietly—makes it a standing grievance every lodge night. And, by and by, you will hear them abuse each other like pickpockets for the same reason. There is a grim-looking fellow, with the great fists, a blacksmith, who is at deadly enmity with that light firm-looking man—touching the shoeing of M'Clutchy's cavalry. Val, who knows a thing or two, if I may so speak, keeps them one off and the other on so admirably, that he contrives to get his own horses shod and all his other iron work done, free, gratis, for nothing between them. This is the truth, brother Weasel: in fact my dear brother Weasel, it is the truth. There are few here who are not moved by some personal hope or expectation from something or from somebody. Down there near the door are a set of fellows—whisper in your ear—about as great scoundrels as you could meet with; insolent, fierce, furious men, with bad passions and no principles, whose chief delight is to get drunk—to kick up party feuds in fairs and markets, and who have, in fact, a natural love for strife. But all are not so. There are many respectable men here who, though a little touched, as is only natural after all, by a little *cacoethes* of self-interest, yet, never suffer it to interfere with the steadiness and propriety of their conduct, or the love of peace and good will. It is these men, who, in truth, sustain the character of the Orange Institution. These are the men of independence and education who repress—as far as they can—the turbulence and outrage of the others. But harken! now they begin.'

"At this moment the din in the room was excessive. Phil had now begun to feel the influence of liquor, as was evident from the frequent thumpings which the table received at his hand—the awful knitting of his eyebrows, as he commanded silence—and the multiplicity of "d—n my honors," which interlarded his conversation.

"'Silence, I say,' he shouted; 'd—n my honor if I'll bear this. Here's Mr. Weasel—eh—Evil, or Devil; d—n my honor, I forget—who has come ov—over all the way—(All the way from Galloway, is that it?—go on)—all the way from England, to get a good sample of Protestantism to bring home with him to distribute among his father's tenantry. Now if he can't find that among ourselves to-night, where the devil would, or could, or ought he to go look for it?'

"'Hurra—bravo—hear brother Captain Phil.'

"'Yes, gentlemen,' continued Phil, rising up; 'yes, Mr. Civil—Evil—Devil; d—n my honor, I *must* be on it now—I am bold to say that we are—are—a set of—'

"'Hurra—hurra—we are, brother Captain Phil.'

"'And, gentlemen, not only that, but *true blues*. (Three cheers for the Castle Cumber True Blue.) And what's a true blue, gentlemen? I ask you zealously—I ask you as a gentleman—I ask you as a man—I ask you determinedly, as one that will do or die, if it comes to that'—(here there was a thump on the table at every word)—'I ask you as an officer of the Castle Cumber Cavalry—and, gentlemen, let any man that hears me—that hears me, I say—because, gentlemen, I ask upon independent principles, as the Deputy-Master of this Lodge, gentlemen—(cheers, hurra, hurra)—and the question is an important one—one

of the greatest and most extraordinary comprehension, so to speak; because, gentlemen, it involves—this great question does—it involves the welfare of his majesty, gentlemen, and of the great and good King William, gentlemen, who freed us from Pope and Popery, gentlemen, and wooden shoes, gentlemen——'

"'But not from wooden spoons, gentlemen,' in a disguised voice from the lower end of the table.

"'Eh?—certainly not—certainly not—I thank my worthy brother for the hint. No, gentlemen, we unfortunately have wooden spoons up to the present day; but, gentlemen, if we work well together—if we be in earnest—if we draw the blade and throw away the scabbard, like our brothers, the glorious heroes of Scullabogue—there is as little doubt, gentlemen, as that the sun this moment—the moon, gentlemen; I beg pardon—shines this moment, that we will yet banish wooden spoons, as the great and good King William did Popery, brass money, and wooden shoes. Gentlemen, you will excuse me for this warmth; but I am not ashamed of it—it is the warmth, gentlemen, that keeps us cool in the moment—the glorious, pious and immortal moment of danger and true loyalty, and attachment to our Church, which we all love and practise on constitutional principles. I trust, gentlemen, you will excuse me for this historical account of *my* feelings—they are the principles, gentlemen, of a gentleman—of a man—of an officer of the Castle Cumber Cavalry—and lastly of him who has the honor—the glorious, pious, and immortal honor, I may say, to hold the honorable situation of Deputy-Master of this honorable Lodge. Gentlemen, I propose our charter toast, with nine times nine—the glorious, pious, and immortal memory. Take the time, gentlemen, from me—hip, hip, hurra.'

"'Brother M'Clutchy,' said a solemn-looking man, dressed in black, 'you are a little out of order—or if not out of order, you have, with great respect, travelled beyond the usages of the Lodge. In the first place—of course you will pardon me—I speak with great respect—but, in the first place, you have proposed the charter toast, before that of the King, Protestant Ascendancy, Church and State; and besides, have proposed it with nine times nine, though it is always drunk in solemn silence.'

"'In all truth and piety, I deny that,' replied little Bob Spaight. 'When I was in Lodge Eleventeen, eleven-teen—no, seventeen, ay, seventeen—we always, undher God, drank it with cheers. Some of them danced—but others, I won't name them, that were more graciously gifted, chorused it with that blessed air of 'Croppies lie Down,' and sometimes with the precious psalm of the 'Boyne Water.'

"'I'm obliged to Mr. Hintwell for his observations, for I'm sure they were well meant; but, gentlemen, with every respect for his—his greater and more tractable qualifications, I must say, that I acted from zeal, from zeal—for, gentlemen, what's an Orangeman without zeal? I'll tell you what he is—an Orangeman without zeal is a shadow without a light, a smoke without a fire, or a Papist without treason. That's what he's like, and now, having answered him, I think I may sit down.'

"Phil, however, whose first night of office it happened to be, as Chairman of the Lodge, had still sense enough about him to go on with the toasts in their proper order. He accordingly commenced with the King, Protestant Ascendancy, the Gates of Bandon, with several other toasts peculiar to the time and place. At length he rose and said:—

"'Gentlemen, are you charged—fill high, gentlemen, for, though it's a low toast, we'll gloriously rise and drink it—are you all charged?'

"'All charged, hurra, captain!'

"'Here, gentlemen, another of our charter toast—The pope in the pillory, the pillory in hell, and the devils pelting him with priests! Gentlemen, I cannot let that—that beautiful toast pass without—out adding a few words to it. Gentlemen it presents a glorious sight, a glorious, pious, and immortal memory of the great and good—ha, beg pardon, gentlemen—a glorious, pious, and immortal sight—think of the pillory, gentlemen, isn't that in itself a glorious and pious sight? And think of the pope, gentlemen; isn't the pope also a glorious and pious sight?'

"'With all truth and piety, and undher God, I deny that,' said Bob Spaight.

"'And so do I,' said a second.

"'And I,' added a third.

"'What damned Popish doctrine is this?' said several others.

"'Brother Phil, be good enough to recollect yourself,' said Solomon, 'we feel, that as a Protestant and Orangeman, you are not doctrinally correct now; be steady, or rather steadfast—ast in the faith.'

"Phil, however, looked oracles, his whole face and person were literally being expanded, as it were, with the consciousness of some immediate triumph.

"'Gentlemen,' he proceeded, 'have a little patience—I say the pope *is* a glorious and pious sight—'

"'Undher God—'

"'Silence Bob.'

"'But I mean when he's in the pillory—eh, d—n my honor, I have you all there! ha, ha, ha!'

"'Hurra, hurra, three cheers more for the captain!'

"'Gentlemen,' he proceeded, 'please to fill again—I give you now the Castle Cumber press, the True Blue and Equivocal, with the healths of Messrs. Yellowboy and Cantwell.'

"'Hurra! Messrs. Yallowboy and Cantwell! hurra, Mr. Yellow, Mr. Yellow.'

"Mr. Yellowboy, who had not been able to come earlier, in consequence of the morrow being publishing day with him, now rose. He was a tall, thin, bony-looking person, who might very well have taken his name from his complexion.

"'Mr. Chairman, gentlemen, and brothers—I rise with great and powerful diffidence to speak, to express myself, and to utter my sentiments before this most respectable, and, what is more, truly loyal auditory—hem. In returning thanks, gentlemen, for the Castle Cumber True Blue (cheers), I am sure I am not actuated by any motive but that staunch and loyal one which stimulates us all—hem. The True Blue, gentlemen, is conducted—has been conducted—and shall be conducted to all eternity—should I continue to be so long at the head of it—so long I say, gentlemen'—here the speaker's eye began to roll—and he slapped the table with vehemence—'I shall, if at the head of it so long, conduct it to all eternity upon the self-same, identical, underivating principles that have idontified me with it for the last six months. What's Pruddestantism, gentlemen, without a bold, straightforward press to take care of its pruvvileges and interests? It's nothing, gentlemen.'

"'Undher God, sir, and with all piety and perseverance I deny—'

"'Silence, brother Bob, don't interrupt Mr. Yellowboy, he'll make himself plain by and by.'

"'I deny—'

"'Silence—I say.'

"'Nothing, gentlemen—a candle that's of no use unless it's lit—and the press is the match that lights it (hurra, cheers). But, as I said in defending Pruddestantism, we advocate civil and religious liberty all over the world—I say so boldly—for, gentlemen, whatever I say, I do say boldly'—here he glanced at the Equivocal—'I am not the man to present you with two faces—or I'm not the man rather to carry two faces—and only show you one of them—I'm not the man to make prutensions as a defender of civil and religious liberty, with a Protestant face to the front of my head, and a Popish face in my pocket—to be produced for the adversary of Popery and idolatry—whenever I can conciliate a clique by doing so.' Here there was a look of sarcastic defiance turned upon Cantwell—who, conscious of his own integrity—merely returned it with a meek and benignant smile, *a la* Solomon.

"'No, gentlemen, I am none of those things—but a bold, honest, uncompermising Pruddestant—who will support the church and Constitution for ever—who will uphold Pruddestant Ascendancy to the Day of Judgment—keep down Popery and treason—and support civil and religious liberty over the world to all eternity.'

"'Cheers—hurra—hurra—success brother Yellowboy.'

"'And now, gentlemen, before I sit down there is but one observation more that I wish to make. If it was only idontified with myself I would never notice it—but it's not only idontified with me but with you, gentlemen—for I am sorry to say there is a snake in the grass—a base, dangerous, Equivocal, crawling reptile among us—who, wherever truth and loyalty is concerned, never has a leg to stand upon, or can put a pen to paper but with a deceitful calumniating attention. He who can divulge the secrets of our Lodge'—(Here there was another furious look sent across which received a polite bow and smile as before)—'who can divulge, gentlemen, the secrets of our Lodge, and allude to those who have been there—I refer, gentlemen, to a paragraph that appeared in the Equivocal some time ago—in which a hint was thrown out that I was found by the editor of that paper lying drunk in the channel of Castle Cumber Main-street, opposite his office—that he brought me in, recovered me, and then helped me home. Now, gentlemen, I'll just mention one circumstance that will disprove the whole base and calumnious charge—it is this—on rising next morning I found that I had eight and three halfpence *safe* in my pocket—and yet that reptile says that he carried me into his house!!! Having thus, gentlemen, triumphantly refuted that charge, I have the pleasure of drinking your healths—the healths of all honest men, and confusion to those who betray the secrets of an Orange Lodge!'

"As each paper had its party in the Lodge, it is not to be supposed that this attack upon the Editor of the Equivocal was at all received with unanimous approbation. Far from it. Several hisses were given, which again were met by cheers, and these by counter cheers. In this disorder Mr. Cant-

well rose, his face beaming with mildness and benignity—sweetness and smiles—and having bowed, stood all meekness and patience until the cheering was over.

"'Brother Cantwell,' said Solomon, 'remember to discard self-reliance—let thy sup—support be from'—but before he could finish, brother Cantwell turned round, and blandly bowing to him, seemed to say—for he did not speak—

"'My dear brother M'Slime, I follow your admirable advice; you see I do—I shall.'

"'Mr. Chairman,' said he, 'gentlemen and dear brothers'—here he paused a moment, whilst calmly removing the tumbler out of his way that he might have room to place his hand upon the table and gently lean towards the chairman. He then serenely smoothed down the frill of his shirt, during which his friends cheered—and ere commencing he gave them another short, and, as it were, parenthetical bow. 'Mr. Chairman, gentlemen, and dear brothers, I do not rise upon this very unpleasant occasion—unpleasant to me it is, but not on my account—for the purpose of giving vent to the coarse effusions of an unlettered mind, that shapes its vulgar outpourings in bad language and worse feeling. No, I am incapable of the bad feeling, in the first place, and, thanks to my education, of illiterate language, in the second. It has pleased my friend Mr. Yellowboy—if he will still allow me to call him so—for I appeal to you all whether it becomes those who sit under this hallowed roof to disagree—it has pleased him, I say, to bring charges against me, to some of which I certainly must plead guilty—if guilt there be in it. It has pleased him to charge me with the unbrotherly crime, the unchristian crime, the un-orange crime'—here he smiled more blandly at every term, and then brought his smiling eye to bear on his antagonist—'of lifting him out of the channel about twelve o'clock at night, where he lay—I may say so among ourselves—in state of most comfortable, but un-orange-like intoxication.'

"The audience now being mostly drunk, were tickled with this compliment to their sobriety, and cheered and shouted for more than a minute. 'Go on Cantwell! By Japers, you're no blockhead!'

"'Under Providence, and with all piety I say it, he will vanquish the yallow sinner over there.'

"'Brother Cantwell,' observed Mr. M'Slime, 'go on—the gift is not withheld.'

"Another smiling bow to M'Slime, as much as to say, 'I know it's not—I feel it's not.'

"'This, gentlemen, and dear brothers, was my crime—I acted the good Samaritan towards him—that was my crime. May I often commit it!'

"'Is that your pretended charity, sir?' said Yellowboy, whose temper was sorely tried by the other's calmness; 'don't you know, sir, that you cannot become the Samaritan unless I become the drunkard? and yet you hope *often* to commit it!'

"No notice whatsoever taken of this.

"'—But perhaps there was still a greater crime in this affair. I allude to the crime of having, after the account of his frailty had taken wind through the whole country, ventured to defend it, or rather to place it in such a light as might enable the public to place it to the account of mere animal exhaustion, independent of the real cause. And I have reason to know, that to a very enlarged extent I succeeded—for many persons having heard of the circumstance in its worse and most offensive sense, actually came to my office——'

"'Yes, after you had made it public, as far as you could.'

"'—To my office, to inquire into it. And I assure you all, gentlemen, that from motives at once of the Christian and the Orangeman, I merely informed them that the gentleman had certainly had, about the time specified, a very severe fit—I did not add of intoxication—on the contrary, I charitably stopped there, and now it would appear that this forbearance on my part is another crime. But even that is not all. The occasion which called forth the paragraph in the paper which I have honor to conduct, was one which I shall just allude to. Some time ago there was inserted in the True Blue a short article headed '*Susanna and the Elder*,' in which certain vague and idle reports, fabricated by some person who bears enmity to a most respectable Christian gentleman, who honors us this moment with his presence——'

"Solomon here approached him, and grasping his hand, exclaimed—

"'Thank you, my dear brother Cantwell—thank you a hundred times; yours is the part of a true Christian; so go on, I entreat you—here is nothing to be ashamed of—I know it is good to be tried.'

"'Now it was really the charity contained in the article from the True Blue that struck me so forcibly—for it not only breathed the scandal so gently, as that it would scarcely stain a mirror—and it did not stain the mirror against which the report was directed—but it placed it as it were, before his eyes, that he might not be maligned without his knowledge, on taking steps to triumph over it, which our friend did—and great was his triumph and meekly was it borne on the oc-

casion. With respect to my political creed, gentlemen, you all know it is my boast that I belong to no party. I advocate broad and general principles; and the more comprehensive they are, so does my love of kind take a wider range. I am a patriot, that is my boast—a moderate man—an educated man; I am, at least, a competent master of the English language, which I trust I can write and speak like a gentleman. I am not given to low and gross habits of life; I am never found in a state of beastly intoxication late at night, or early in the day; nor do I suffer my paper to become the vehicle of gratifying that private slander or personal resentment which I am not capable of writing myself, and have not the courage to acknowledge as a man. I am not a poor, kicked, horse-whipped, and degraded scoundrel, whose malignity is only surpassed by my cowardice—whose principal delight is to stab in the dark—a lurking assassin, but not an open murderer—a sneaking, skulking thief, without the manliness of the highwayman—a pitiful, servile——but, I believe, I have said enough. Well, gentlemen, I trust I am none of these; nor am I saying who is. Perhaps it would be impossible to find them all centred in the same man; but if it were, it would certainly be quite as extraordinary to find that man seated at an Orange Lodge. Brother Yellowboy, I have the pleasure of drinking *your* health.'

"Brother Yellowboy felt that he was no match at all for Cantwell; so in order to escape the further venom of his tongue, he drank his in return, and joined in the cheers with which his speech was received; for by this time the audience cared not a fig what was said by either party."

CHAPTER XX.

Sobriety and Loyalty—A Checkered Dialogue—The Beauty and Necessity of Human Frailty—A Burning and Shining Light Going Home in the Dark—The Value of a Lanthorn.

"The character or forms of decency which had hitherto prevailed, now began to disappear. M'Clutchy's blood-hounds, or wreckers—for they were indiscriminately termed both—having drank a great deal of liquor, became quite violent, and nothing now was heard but party songs, loud talk, and offensive toasts, mingled with a good deal of personal abuse, and private jealousies of each other's influence with M'Clutchy.

"'D—n your blood, Grimes, I'm as loyal as ever you were. Wasn't my grandfather a Tory hunter, who houghed and hanged more bloody Papishes—'

"'Who's that,' said Bob, 'talking about hanging Papishes? Where—where are they to be hanged? Under God, I have seen more of the villains hanged than any other frail sinner in the province. Oh, it is a consoling—a sustaining sight!'

"'What's the reason, then, that the Protestant gentry of the country don't stand by their own? Why do they deal with Papishes? By Japers they don't deserve us to stand by them.'

"'I say, Fulton, it's a d—d lie. I was at the wrecking of the Ballyglass Threshers, when you shabbed sickness and wouldn't go.'

"'And I am glad I didn't. A purty business you made of it—to pull down the houses, and wreck the furniture about the ears of a set of women and children; I say such conduct is disgraceful to Orangemen.'

"'An' what the devil right have you to expect the sargeantship, then, when you won't perform its duties?'

"'I don't care a d—n about you or it. The Pope in the pillory, the pillory in h—l—'

"'—Sent the bullet through his palm, and kept his finger and thumb together ever since—

—"'Lero lero lillibullero, lillibullero bullenela.'—

'—Sleet or slaughter, holy water,
Sprinkle the Catholics every one;
Cut them asunder, and make them lie undher,
The Protestant boys will carry their own.—'

"'They can never stand the guns—the lead makes them fly—and, by Japers, they'll get it.—'

"'What health, man? out with it; are we to sit here all night for it?—'

"'He gets half his bread from a d——d Papish, merely because he's his tenant—instead of getting the whole of it from me, that's better than a tenant, a brother Orangeman—

—"'King James he pitched his tents between
The lines for to retire;
But King William threw his bomb balls in,
And set them all on fire.'—

"In fact the confusion of Babel was nothing to it now, every voice was loud, and what between singing, swearing, shouting, arguing, drinking toasts, and howling, of various descriptions, it would not be easy to to find anything in any other country that could be compared to it.

"Phil himself was by this time nearly as drunk as any of them, but in consequence of several hints from those who preserved

their sobriety, and several of them did, he now got to his legs, and called silence.

"'Silence, sil-sil-silence, I say, d—n my honor if I'll bear this. Do you think (hiccup) we can separate without drinking the Castle Cu-Cumber toast. Fill, gentle-(hiccup)-men, here's Lord Cumber and the Castle-Castle Cu-Cumber property, with the health of Sol-Sol-Solo-Solomon M'Slime, Esq.—

—"'For God will be our king this day,
And I'll be the general over—eh—over
—no, no, under.'—

"'Under, I believe (hiccup)—'

"'Silence, there, I say.'

"'My friends—my dear friends,' said Solomon—'my brothers—Christian brethren, I should say, for you are Christian brethren—Lord Cum-ber's health is a good thing, and his property is a good thing; and I—I return you thanks for it, as I am bound to do, as a Christian. Am I Christian? Well—' (here he smiled, and laying his hand upon his heart, added,) 'well I know what I feel *here*, that is all. My dear friends, I said that Lord Cumber's health and property were good things, but I know a thing that's better, more valuable, richer—and what is that? It is here, in this poor frail—but not frail so long as that thing is here—that thing, what is it? Oh, if you had prayed for it, wrestled for it, fought for it, as I did, you would know what it is, and all the delightful and elevating consolations it brings along with it. Surely some one drank Lord Cumber's health! That was well; he sitteth in a high place, and deserveth honor. Let us drink his health, my friends—let us drink it, yea, abundantly, even unto rejoicing. But what is this thing? Why, it is the sense of inward support, a mild, sweet light, that diffuses pleasant thoughts through you, that multiplies every good gift about you, that makes one cup of pleasant liquor seem two. It is not to many that these things are vouchsafed; not, I believe, to any here, always with humility and fear be it spoken, excepting Bob Spaight and myself—

—"'July the first in Oldbridge town,

responded Bob,

"'There was a grievous battle,
Where many a man lay on the ground,
By the cannons that did rattle.'—

"'Yea,' pursued Bob, 'the gift is come, brother Solomon—the fifth cup always brings it—

—'King James he pitched his tents between'—

"'Aye, but, brother Bob,' resumed Solomon, 'the gift is a little too soon on this occasion. Let me give the words, and, Bob, if you could manage the 'Protestant Boys,' rather than 'Croppies lie Down,' it would suit it; and, indeed, it would be well if the whole congregation joined us in it. I shall give the words—let me see, long measure, eight lines, four nines, and four six-sixes;—

"'There's nought but care on every hand,
In every hour that passes, oh,
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere not for the lasses, oh."

eh, let me see—am I right?'

"'Right,' they shouted, 'never were half so right, Solomon. We'll join you to a man,' and accordingly, with one voice, they gave the stanza at the top of their voices, little Bob leading them, to the air of 'Croppies lie Down,' in a style that was perfectly irresistible.

"Thus ended a night *in* an Orange Lodge, but not so out of it. Those who had to go any distance, were armed, and the consequence was, that when they got into the street, they commenced their usual courses: shots were fired in every direction, offensive songs were sung—any money for the face of a Papist—to hell with the Pope—Ram down Catholics, and so on. At length, by degrees these all ceased, the streets gradually grew quiet, then still, and another night closed upon the habits of a class of men, who, in the wantonness of their power, scarcely knew what they did.

"Having witnessed the scene just described—a scene that accounted very clearly for at least one important phase of Irish life—I deemed it full time to go to bed, this being the inn in which I stop. I accordingly was about to ascend the staircase, from the lobby, for we sat in the back drawing-room, when I thought I heard a voice that was not unfamiliar to me, giving expression to language in which I could perceive there was a very peculiar blending of love and devotion; that is to say, it was exceedingly difficult, from the admirable tact with which he balanced the application of the two principles, whether Solomon, for it was he, loved the physical or the spiritual system of the barmaid, for it was she, with more earnestness and warmth. The family at this time had all retired for the night, with the exception of boots, and the barmaid in question, a well made, pretty Irish girl, with a pair of roguish eyes in her head, that beamed with fun and good humor. Solomon, instead of going home, had got into a little retired spot behind the bar, called the snuggery, and into which, of

course, she attended him with a glass of liquor.

"'Eliza,' said Solomon, 'Eliza, I have often had an intention of asking you to allow me the privilege and the pleasure, Eliza, of some serious conversation with you. It is a trying world, a wicked world, and to—to a girl—so charming a girl as you are, Eliza—'

"'Charming, Mr. M'Slime; well, well!'

"'Charming, certainly, as regards your person, your external person—your person is indeed very charming, and verily, Eliza, this brandy and water is truly precious, so beautifully blended, that I cannot—now, Eliza, will you pardon me a small, but, I trust, not unedifying joke; yes, you will—I know—I see you will—very well, then, the little joke is pardoned—this brandy and water are so beautifully blended, that I cannot help thinking there is something in that sweet hand of yours that diffuses a delicious flavor upon it—I know that such things exist.'

"'Upon my word, Mr. M'Slime, from such a religious gentleman as you are, I didn't expect—'

"'Ah, my dear Eliza, that is coming to the root of the matter, and I am glad to find that you are not insensible to it. On that subject, my sweet girl, and you are a sweet girl—it is that I propose to speak with you—to commune with you—in a spirit, my dear Eliza, of love and affection. Will you then take a seat—a seat, my dear Eliza.'

"'I fear I cannot, sir; you know there is no one else to keep an eye to the bar.'

"'The business of the bar, my dear girl, is over for this night; but not, I trust—sincerely trust—that of the sweet barmaid; do sit, Eliza, pray be seated, and let me have a word with you in season; thank you, but not at such a distance, Eliza, such an inconvenient distance; I say inconvenient—because—ugh, ugh, I have caught a slight cold—as a trial it came—and I will receive it so, that has fallen for the time—ugh, ugh, ugh—upon my lungs, and renders it a good deal troublesome to me to speak loud; so that the nearer you sit—and it has affected my head a little, only with a slight deafness, though, which—were you speaking, my dear?'

"'No, sir.'

"'Yes, so I thought, you were saying something—will soon pass away.'

"I thought this dialogue, on the part of M'Slime, too characteristic to be lost. I accordingly stole somewhat near the snuggery, until I got into a position from whence I could see them clearly, without being seen myself. It was quite evident from the humor, which, in spite of a demure face, glinted from her eye, that Eliza's object was to occasion M'Slime to assume his real character, for I could easily see that from time to time she felt very considerable difficulty in suppressing her laughter.

"'The deafness, Eliza, I feel particularly troublesome, though not painful; as while transacting business it f-forces me to sit so very close to my clients.'

"'But I am not a client, Mr. M'Slime, and you need not draw your chair so close to me—there now, that will do.'

"'You are my sweet—sweet girl; you are my client—and you shall be my client—and upon a most important subject—the most important of all; verily, Eliza, this is a most delicious cup of refreshment. How did you flavor it—but, indeed, if I were, as I have been, before I was graciously called and chosen, I would have recourse to a harmless gallantry, and say that this most ambrosial beverage must have caught its sweetness from your lips—its fragrance from your breath—and its lustre from your eyes—I would say so—if I were as I have been—and, indeed, as I am—even yet, frail, Eliza, still frail, and very far, indeed, from perfection—but, still, even as I am I could scarcely scruple to relapse a little—yea, only a little, Eliza, for the sake of such lips—of such eyes—and such a fragrant breath. Alas! we are all frail.'

"'But, Mr. M'Slime, I surely didn't think that you who stand so high in the religious world, and that the people look upon as a saint, would talk as you do.'

"'Ah, Eliza, my dear girl, it is very natural for you in your hitherto darkened state to say so; but, sweet Eliza, if you had your privileges, you could understand me. For instance, in the indulgence of this precious little dialogue with you, I am only following up a duty that strengthens myself; for, Eliza, my precious creature, if more light were given you, you would be permitted to feel that an occasional lapse is for our good, by showing us our own weakness and how little we can do of ourselves. No—there is nothing which gives us so much confidence and strength as to know our own weakness; but, my sweet girl, of what use is it for us to know it, if we do not feel it; and why feel it—unless we suffer it for better purposes to teach us a practical lesson to humble us.'

"'That's queer doctrine, Mr. M'Slime, and I don't properly understand it.'

"'I know you don't, my darling girl; for it has not been given to you, as yet, to understand it. Nay, it seems, as it were, a stumbling block to you, in your present state.'

"'Why, do you think me so very great a sinner, sir?'

"'Not by acts, Eliza—and what a soft name is Eliza—soft as a pillow of down—but by condition. You are exalted now, upon pride—not personal pride, but the pride of position. You think you are incapable of error or infirmity, but you must be brought down to a sense of your own frailty, as it were, for it is upon a consciousness of that, that you must build.'

"'That is to say, I must commit sin first, in order to know the grace of repentance afterwards.'

"'You put it too strongly, Eliza; but here is the illustration:—You know it is said 'there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just men.' And I know many, Eliza, who go through a long course of virtuous iniquity, in order that their triumph in the end may be the greater. I have myself practised it on a small way, and found it refreshing. And now, Eliza, bring me another cup of brandy and water, even for my stomach's sake; and, Eliza, my charming girl, put it to those sweet lips—that it may catch the true fragrance—Christian fragrance I wish I could say—for they are fragrant lips—and a sweet arm—a full tapering arm you are gifted with. Ah! Eliza, if you could feel as I feel—nay, it was the chair that was unsteady—my my heart is dis—dissolving, Eliza. If you were only a little more frail, my sweet girl—we could feel this a kind of religious exercise. Oh! these precious little frailties—these precious little frailties!'

"'Mr. M'Slime you will excuse me, but I think you have got enough, and a little too much liquor. If you should be seen going home in an unsteady state your character would suffer.'

"'Another cup of refreshment, Eliza—but I am not perfection—no—nor would I be perfection. What would life be without these precious little frailties—that make us what we are.'

"'With all piety and undher——'

"'Who is that,' inquired the maid, evidently startled, if not affrighted by a strange voice.

"'I join—join you, brother M'Slime, for another cup of refreshment.'

"'Bob Spaight—brother Bob—I am glad you are here; Eliza, my darling—my dove—another cup for Bob, and after that we shall aid each other home—will render one another Christian and mutual assistance.'

"'Yes,' replied Bob, clearing his voice:—

Bob—'King James he pitched his tents between
Solomon—'There's naught but care on every hand,
} *Simultaneously.*

Bob—The lines for to retire,
Solomon—In every hour that passes, O,
} *Simultaneously.*

Bob—But King William threw his bomb balls in,
Solomon—What signifies the life o' man,

Bob—And set them all on fire.'
Solomon—An' 'twerna for the lasses, O!'

"'Many thanks, sweet Eliza—oh! that I could say my frail Eliza; but I shall be able to say so yet, I trust; I *shall* be able to say so.'

"'God forbid,' she replied. 'This is not for you, Mr. M'Slime—I certainly will give you no more this night. But Bob here is a favorite of mine. Bob, you will see Mr. M'Slime home?'

"'In all piety and truth, I shall see that burning and shining light home,' returned Bob; 'in the meantime I will thank you for the loan of a lanthorn; the night is one of most unchristian darkness.'

"Solomon had now reclined his head upon the table as if for sleep, which he very probably would have indulged in, despite of all opposition; but just at this moment his horse, car, and servant most opportunely arrived, and with the aid of Bob, succeeded in getting him away, much against his own inclination; for it would appear by his language that he had no intention whatsoever of departing, if left to himself.

"'I shall not go,' said he; 'it is permitted to me to sojourn here this night. Where is Eliza? Oh! Eliza, my darling—these precious little frailties.'

"'Bring the little hypocrite home out of this,' said she, with a good deal of indignation; for, in truth, the worthy saint uttered the last words in so significant a voice, with such a confidential crow, as might have thrown out intimations not quite favorable to her sense of propriety on the occasion. He was literally forced out, therefore; but not until he had made several efforts to grasp Eliza's hand, and to get his arm around her.

"'She's a sweet creature—a delightful dove; but too innocent. Oh! Eliza, these precious little frailties!—these precious little frailties!'

"'It's a shame,' said Eliza, 'and a scandal to see any man making such pretensions to religion, in such a state.'

"'In all piety and truth,' said Bob, 'I say he's a burning and a shining light!'

"'King James he pitched his tents between
Their lines for to retire,' &c., &c.

"And so they departed, very much to the satisfaction of Eliza and Boots, who were

both obliged to sit up until his departure, although fatigued with a long day's hard and incessant labor. I also retired to my pillow, where I lay for a considerable time reflecting on the occurrences of the night, and the ease with which an ingenious hypocrite may turn the forms, but not the spirit of religion, to the worst and most iniquitous purpose." * * * * *

And thus far our friend, Mr. Easel, whom we leave to follow up his examinations into the state of the Castle Cumber property, and its management, hoping that discoveries and disclosures may at some future day be of service to the tenantry on that fine estate, as well as to the country at large. In the meantime, we beg our readers to accompany us to the scene of many an act of gross corruption, where jobs, and jobbing, and selfishness in their worst shapes, aided by knavery, fraud, bigotry, party rancor, personal hate, and revenge long cherished—where active loyalty and high political Protestantism, assuming the name of religion, and all the other passions and prejudices that have been suffered to scourge the country so long—have often been in full operation, without check, restraint, or any wholesome responsibility, that might, or could, or ought to have protected the property of the people from rapine, and their persons from oppression. The scene we allude to is the Grand Jury Room of Castle Cumber.

CHAPTER XXI.

A Protestant Charger, with his Precious Burthen—A Disaffected Hack supporting a Pillar of the Church—A Political and Religious Discussion in a Friendly Way—Darby's Piety Rewarded.

The Assizes had now arrived, and the Grand Panel of the county met once more to transact their fiscal and criminal business. We omit the grand entry of the Judges, escorted, as they were, by a large military guard, and the *posse comitatus* of the county, not omitting to mention a goodly and imposing array of the gentry and squirearchy of the immediate and surrounding districts, many of whom were pranked out in all the grandeur of their Orange robes. As, however, we are only yet upon our way there, we beg you to direct your attention to two gentlemen dressed in black, and mounted each in a peculiar and characteristic manner. One of them is a large, bloated, but rather handsome, and decidedly aristocratic looking man, with a vermilion face, mounted upon a splendid charger, whose blood and action must have been trained to that kind of subdued but elegant bearing that would seem to indicate, upon the part of the animal, a consciousness that he too owed a duty to the Church and Constitution, and had a just right to come within the category of a staunch and loyal Protestant horse, as being entrusted with the life, virtues, and dignity of no less a person than the Rev. Phineas Lucre—all of which are now on his back assembled, as they always are, in that reverend gentleman's precious person. Here we account at once for the animal's cautious sobriety of step, and pride and dignity of action, together with his devoted attachment to the Church and Constitution by which he lived, and owing to which he wore a coat quite as sleek, but by no means so black as his master's. The gentleman by whom he appears to be accompanied, much—if we can judge by their motions—against his will, seems to be quite as strongly contrasted to him, as the rough undressed hack upon which he is mounted is to the sanctified and aristocratic nag that is honored by bearing the Rev. Phineas Lucre. The hack in question is, nevertheless, a stout and desperate looking varmint, with a red vindictive eye, moving, ill-tempered ears, and a tail that seems to be the seat of intellect, if a person is to take its quick and furious whisking as being given in reply to Mr. Lucre's observations, or by way of corroboration of the truth uttered by the huge and able-bodied individual who is astride of him. That individual is no other than the Rev. Father M'Cabe, who is dressed in a coat and waistcoat of coarse black broadcloth, somewhat worse for the wear, a pair of black breeches, deprived of their original gloss, and a pair of boots well greased with honest hog's lard—the fact being, that the wonderful discovery of Day and Martin had not then come to light. Mr. M'Cabe has clearly an unsettled and dissatisfied seat, and does not sit his horse with the ease and dignity of his companion. In fact, he feels that matters are not proceeding as he could wish, neither does the hack at all appear to bear cordiality or affection to the state which keeps him on such short commons. They are, by no means, either of them in a state of peace or patience with the powers that be, and when the priest, at the conclusion of every sentence, gives the garran an angry dash of the spurs, as much as to say, was not that observation right, no man could mistake the venomous spirit in which the tail is whisked, and the head shaken, in reply.

It is scarcely necessary to say that either Mr. Lucre or Mr. M'Cabe were at all upon terms of intimacy. Mr. M'Cabe considered Mr. Lucre as a wealthy epicure, fat and

heretical; whilst Mr. Lucre looked upon Father McCabe as vulgar and idolatrous. It was impossible, in fact, that with such an opinion of each other, they could for a moment agree in anything, or meet as men qualified by the virtues of their station to discharge on any one duty in common. On the day in question, Mr. Lucre was riding towards Castle Cumber, with the pious intention of getting Darby O'Drive's appointment to the under jailorship confirmed. This was one motive, but there was another still stronger, which was, to have an interview with the leading men of the Grand Jury, for the purpose of getting a new road run past his Glebe House, in the first place, and, in the next, to secure a good job for himself, as a magistrate. At all events he was proceeding towards Castle Cumber, apparently engaged in the contemplation of some important subject, but whether it was the new road to his glebe, or the old one to heaven, is beyond our penetration to determine. Be this as it may, such was his abstraction, that he noticed not the Rev. Father M'Cabe, who had ridden for some time along with him, until that gentleman thought proper to break the ice of ceremony, and address him.

"Sir, your most obedient," said the priest; "excuse my freedom—I am the Rev. Mr. M'Cabe, Catholic Curate of Castle Cumber; but as I reside in the parish it is very possible you don't know me."

Mr. Lucre felt much hurt at the insinuation thrown out against his long absence from the parish and replied:—

"I do not, sir, in the least regret our want of intimacy. The character of your ministry in the parish is such, that he who can congratulate himself on *not* being acquainted with you has something to boast of. Excuse me, sir, but I beg to assure you, that I am not at all solicitous of the honor of your company."

"Touching my ministry," said the priest, "which it pleases you to condemn, I'd have you to know, that I will teach my people how to resist oppression so long as I am able to teach them anything. I will not allow them to remain tame drudges under burthens that make you and such as you as fat and proud as Lucifer."

"I request you will be good enough, sir, to take some other way," said Mr. Lucre; "you are a rude and vulgar person whom I neither know nor wish to know. The pike and torch, sir, are congenial weapons to such a mind as yours; I do beg you will take some other way, and not continue to annoy me any longer."

"This way, man alive—"

"Man alive! To whom do you address such a term?" said Mr. Lucre; "I really have never met so very vulgar a person; I am quite sickened, upon my honor. Man alive!! I trust I shall soon get rid of you."

"This way, man alive," responded the priest, "is as free to me, in spite of corrupt jobs and grand juries, as it is to you or any other tyrant, whether spiritual or temporal. If there are turbulence and disturbances in this parish, it is because bad laws, unjustly administered, drive the people, first, into poverty, and then into resistance. And, sir, you are not to tell me, for I will not believe it, that a bad law, dishonestly and partially administered, is not to be resisted by every legal means."

"Do you call noon-day murder, midnight assassination, and incendiarism, legal? Do you call schooling the people into rebellion, and familiarizing them with crime, legal? All this may be allegiance to your pope, but it deserves a halter from the king and laws of England."

"The king and laws of England, sir, have ever been more liberal of halters to the Irish Catholics, than they have been of either common justice or fair play. What do the Catholic people get, or have ever got, from you and such as you, in return for the luxury which you draw, without thanks, from their sweat and labor, but gaols, and chains, and scourges, and halters. Hanging, and transportations, triangles, and drumhead verdicts, are admirable means to conciliate the Catholic people of Ireland."

"The Catholic people of Ireland may thank you, and such red hot intemperate men as you, for the hangings, and transportations which the violated laws of the country justly awarded them."

"And have you, sir, who wring the blood and sweat out of them, the audacity to use such language to me? Did not your English kings and your English laws make education a crime, and did you not then most inhumanly and cruelly punish us for the offences which want of education occasioned?"

"Yes; because you made such knowledge as you then acquired, the vehicle, as you are doing now, of spreading abroad disaffection against Church and State, and of disturbing the peace of the country."

"Because, proud parson, when the people become enlightened by education, they insist, and will insist upon their rights, and refuse to be pressed to death by such a bloated and blood-sucking incubus as your Established Church."

"If this be true, then, upon your own

showing, you ought to be favorable to education among the people; but that, we know you are not. You have no schools; and you will not suffer us, who are willing, to educate them for you."

"Certainly not, we have no notion to sit tamely by and see you, and such as you, instil your own principles into our flocks. But in talking of education, in what state, let me ask you, is your own church in this blessed year of 1804, with all her wealth and splendor at her back? I tell you, sir, in every district where the population is equal, we can show two Catholic schools for your one. When you impute our poverty, sir, as a reluctance to educate our people, you utter a libel against the Catholic priesthood of Ireland for which you deserve to be prosecuted in a court of justice, and nailed snugly to the pillory afterwards."

"Nailed snugly to the pillory! I never felt myself so much degraded as by this conversation with you."

"Sir, the Catholic priesthood have always been at their duty at the bed of sickness, and sorrow, and death, among the poor and afflicted; where you, who live by their hard and slavish labor, have never been known to show your red nose."

"Red nose—ha—ha—dear me, how well bred, how admirably accomplished, and how finely polished. Red nose!"

"Faith, you did well to correct me, it is only a mulberry. Wasn't your Irish Establishment in a blessed torpor—dying like a plethoric parson after his venison or turtle, until ould Jack Wesley roused it? Then, indeed, when you saw your flocks running to barns and hedges after the black caps, and the high-cheeked disciples of sanctity and strong dinners—you yawned, rubbed your eyes, stroked your dewlaps, and waddled off to fight in your own defence against the long-winded invaders of your rounds and sirloins. Where was your love of education before that shock, my worthy Bible man? Faith, I'm peppering you!"

"Sir, if I could have anticipated such very vulgar insolence, I would have taken some other way. Why obtrude yourself thus upon me? I trust you have no notion of personal violence?"

"Wesley nudged you."

"Nudged us! I do not understand your slang at all, my good sir. Those who are taken from the ditch to the college, and sent back from the college with the crust of their original prejudices hardened upon them, are not those from whom educated men are to expect refinement or good manners."

"From the ditch! We are taken from humble life, proud parson, to the college; and it is better to enter college from the simplicity of humble life, than to enter the church with the rank savor of fashionable profligacy strong upon us. Not a bad preparation for a carnal establishment, where every temptation is presented to glut every passion."

"You forget, sir, what a system of abomination your church was before the light of the Reformation came upon her; and what a mockery of religion she is to this day."

"Whatever I may forget, I cannot but remember the mockery of religion presented by your proud and bloated Bishops who roll in wealth, indolence, and sensuality; robbing the poor, whilst they themselves go to h—l worth hundreds of thousands. I cannot forget that your church is a market for venal and titled slaves, who are bought by the minister of the day to uphold his party—that it is a carcass thrown to the wolfish sons and brothers of the English and Irish aristocracy—and that its bishops and dignitaries exceed in pride, violence of temper, and insolence of deportment, any other class of persons in society. Sure they have their chaplains to pray for them—but my soul to glory—those that pray by proxy will go to heaven by proxy—and so they ought. Eh—faith I'm peppering you."

"De te fabula narratur. Don't you live by praying for others? What are your masses?"

"Fabula, why, a fibula for your fabula, man alive. What is your new fangled creed, but a fabula from the beginning?"

"And are you yourself not a hireling in every sense of the word? Do you not make merchandise of the crimes and ignorance of your people?"

"Make merchandise! This from you who take away a tenth part of the poor man's labor without the consciousness of even professing his creed?"

"Do you ever worship the Lord aright, or address him in any language which the people can understand?"

"And do you ever seek salvation with half the zeal displayed when you lay your keen nostril to the trail of a fresh benefice or a fat mitre. Do you not, most of you, think more of your hounds and kennels, than you do of either your churches or your flocks?"

Mr. Lucre at length pulled up his horse and fixing his eyes on Father M'Cabe, inquired why he should have fastened upon him in so offensive a manner; and Mr. M'Cabe pulling up the hack we spoke of, fixed a pair of fiery orbs on him in return, and replied—

"I haven't done with you yet, my worthy

parson. You needn't scowl, I say, for if you had as many chins upon you as there are articles in your creed, I wouldn't be prevented from bringing you to an account for interfering with my flock."

"Rude and wretched man, how?"

"By attempting to pervert Darby O'Drive, the bailiff, and seduce him over to your heresies."

"I would bring him over from his idolatry and superstition. But why do you, sir, tamper with a man—named—named—let me see—Bob—Bob Beatty, I think, who belongs to my congregation?"

"Simply because I wish to bring him over from a false church to the true one."

"It appears that because this simple person has been afflicted with epilepsy, you have attempted, through some pious juggling or other, to effect his cure, by enjoining him not to enter a church door or eat swine's flesh during his life. Are you not ashamed, sir, of such ungodly frauds as this?"

"Swine's flesh! Call it bacon, man alive, like a man. Yes, and I tell you moreover, that I have cured him—and with a blessing shall cure him better still, if that is any consolation to you. From being a purple Orangeman, I have him now hard at work every day at his *Padderheen Partha*. But I now caution you not to unsettle the religious principles of Darby O'Drive, the bailiff."

"Why, sir, the man has no religious opinion, nor ever had; thanks to Mr. M'Cabe."

"And I'm bound to say, that such a thick-headed villian in religious matters as Bob Beatty I never met. God knows I had a sore handful of him. So, now remember my caution, and good bye to you; I think you'll know me again when you meet me."

Lucre gave him a haughty scowl ere the priest turned off a bridle road, but made no other reply—not even by inclining his head to him; but, indeed, it was hardly to be expected that he should.

Such is the anxiety to snap up a convert in Ireland, it matters not *from* what church or *to* what church, that Mr. Lucre lost no time in securing the appointment of honest Darby to the office of Castle Cumber Deputy Goaler—an appointment to which both M'Clutchy and M'Slime strongly recommended him, not certainly from an excess of affection towards that simple and worthy man, but from a misgiving that an important portion of a certain correspondence in the shape of two letters was in his possession, and that so far they were prudent in declining to provoke his enmity.

CHAPTER XXII.

Castle Cumber Grand Jury Room—A Conscientious Hangman—Way to a Glebe House of More Importance than the Way to Heaven—Irish Method of Dispensing Justice—Short Debate on the Spy System—Genealogical Memoranda—Patriotic Presentments—A Riverless Bridge.

We pass now, however, to the Grand Jury Room of the county, and truly as a subordinate tribunal for aiding the administration of justice, it was, at the time of which we write, one of the most anomalous exhibitions that could be witnessed. It was a long room, about thirty-six or forty feet in length, by thirty, with a fire-place at each end, and one or two at the sides. Above the chimney-piece was an oil painting of William the Third, together with a small bronze equestrian statue of the same prince, and another of George the Third. There were some other portraits of past and present jurors, presented by themselves or their friends. But there was certainly one which we cannot omit, although by whom presented, or on what occasion, we are wholly unable to inform the reader. We are inclined to think it must have been placed there by some satirical wag, who wished to ridicule the extent to which mere royalty was carried in those days, and the warmth of admiration with which its most besotted manifestations were received. The picture in question was the portrait of a pious hangman, who was too conscientious to hang any one but a Papist. They called him Jerry Giles; a little squat fellow, with a face like a triangle, a broken nose, and a pair of misplaced or ill-matched eye-brows, one of them being nearly an inch higher up the forehead than the other. Jerry, it seems, had his own opinions, one of which was, that there existed no law in the constitution for hanging a Protestant. He said that if he were to hang a Protestant felon, he would be forced to consider it in his conscience only another name for suicide; and that, with a blessing, he would string up none but such vile wretches as were out of the pale of the constitution, and consequently not entitled to any political grace or salvation whatever. And, indeed, upon the principles of the day, the portrait of Jerry was nearly as well entitled to be hung among the grand jurors as that of any one there.

Seated about a long table, covered with green baize, were a number of men, with papers before them; whilst grouped in different parts of the room were the younger persons, amusing themselves by the accidents of the last meet—if it happened to be the hunting season—or the last duel, or the

last female victim to the corruption and profligacy of some of those from whom the people were to expect justice, and their families protection. Others were whistling or humming some favorite air; and one of them, a poet, was reading a squib which he had prepared for the forthcoming election.

"Deaker, come here," said the Foreman, "you are up to everything. Here is Lucre, the parson, wants to have a presentment for a new line of road running through his glebe, or to his glebe—for I suppose it is the same thing."

"Well," replied Deaker, "and let him have it. Isn't he as well entitled to a job as any of us? What the devil—why not put a few feathers in his nest, man? The county has a broad back."

"His nest is better feathered than he deserves. He has two enormous livings, a good private fortune, and now, indeed, he must come to saddle himself upon the county in the shape of a job."

"He has rendered good service, Mr. Hartley," replied another of them; "good service to the government, sir, with every respect for your wonderful liberality and honesty."

"What do you mean, sir?" asked Hartley, sternly; "do you throw out any imputation against my honor or my honesty?"

"Oh, Lord, no—by no means; I have no relish at all for your cold lead, Mr. Hartley—only that I don't think you stand the best chance in the world of being returned for Castle Cumber, sir—that is all."

"Hartley," asked another, with a loud laugh, "is it true that your cousin, on bringing a message to young Phil M'Clutchy, pulled his nose, and kicked him *a posteriore* round the room?"

"Ask his father, Dick," said Hartley, smiling; "I have heard he was present, and, of course, he knows best."

"I say, Vulture," inquired the other, "is it true?"

"Ay," returned old Deaker, "as true as the nose on your face. That precious Phil was a cowardly whelp all his life—so was his father. D—n you, sirra; where did you get your cowardice? I'm sure it was not from me; that is if you be mine, which is a rather problematical circumstance; for I take it you are as likely to be the descent of some rascally turnkey or hatchman, and be hanged to you, as mine."

"Is it true, Val," persisted the former querist, "that young Hartley pulled Phil's nose?"

"We have come here for other purposes, Dick," said Val. "Certainly Phil did not wish to strike the young man in his own house, and had more sense than to violate the peace in the presence of a magistrate, and that magistrate his own father."

"How the devil did he put his comether on M'Loughlin's pretty daughter, Val?" asked another from a different part of the room.

"That," said Deaker, "is the only spirited thing I ever knew him to manage. Is it true, Val, that he was found in her bedroom?"

"It is certainly true," replied Val, with a smile of peculiar meaning; "and with her own consent too."

"That's false, Val," replied Hartley; "and you know it. That he was in her room for a couple of minutes is true; but that he was there for any purpose prejudicial to her honor, that is, with her own consent, is false. The whole thing was a cowardly trick on the part of your son, concocted by the aid of old Poll Doolin, for the purpose of injuring the girl's reputation."

"Ay," said old Deaker, "I dare say you are right, Hartley, if Poll Doolin was in it; but, d—n her, she's dangerous, even at a distance, if all that's said of her be true. I say, Spavin"—this was a nickname given to the Foreman, in consequence of a slight halt or lameness for which he was remarkable—"are we not to find bills for something against Harman, who is about to be married to that wench."

"What," said Hartley, laughing, "is it on *that* account? I think if you said so Deaker, you'd not be very far from the truth."

"He murdered one of my fellows," said M'Clutchy, "one of the staunchest Protestants and loyalest men that ever was in the country; and, what is more, he did it in cold blood."

"You were not present," said Hartley, "and consequently have no right to attempt to prejudice the minds of the jury against him."

"We shall find the bills for all that," said Spavin, "the interference of such fellows in the execution of the laws must be put a stop to."

"You are right, Spavin," said Sir William; "if we can't hang him, let us send him across. He had no business to touch the hair of a blood-hound's head. Gad, Hartley, this is pretty justice, isn't it? why didn't the disloyal rascal stand and let himself be shot in obedience to the spirit of the constitution, rather than molest a blood-hound. I tell you, my good friends, that this method of managing things will bring about its own remedy yet."

"Oh, Sir William, you and Hartley would run well in a chaise together—both always for the rebels."

"Whom do you call the rebels?"

"Why the Papists, to be sure."

"No more rebels, Moore, than you are," replied Hartley—"I find a Papist as good as another man, if he's as well and as fairly treated."

"Irwin," said a large gouty man, whose legs were wrapped in flannel, "of course you've heard of Sir William's method of dispensing justice. Will that too, sir, find its own remedy—eh? ha, ha, ha; d——e, it's the most novel thing going."

"No—how is it, Anderson?"

"Why, if two neighbors chance to fall out, or have a quarrel, and if it happens also that they come to take the law of one another, as they call it, what does the worthy baronet do, do you imagine? 'Well, my good fellow,' proceeds our justice, 'you want to take the law of this man?'

"'Yes, your honor.'

"'And you want to take the law of him,' addressing the other.

"'I do, the rascal.'

"'Very well, my good friends, if you wish to get law you have come to the wrong shop for it—we deal in nothing but justice here: so if you prefer justice to law, you shall have it.'

"'Whichever your honor thinks is best for us.'

"'Very well, then; are you able to fight this man?'

"'Ha, ha, is it there you are, Sir William?' says the fellow, brightening, 'able is it! ay, and willing too.'

"'And,' says the baronet, addressing the other again, 'are you a match for *him*, do you think?'

"'Say no more, Sir William; only it was surely the Lord put the words into your mouth.'

"'But,' proceeds Sir W., 'mark me, if you don't both abide by this battle—if either of you, no matter which is beaten, shall attempt to get law elsewhere, upon my honor and soul, I will prosecute you both.' The justice being well furnished with a sheaf of cudgels for the purpose, selects one for each, brings them quietly to the stable yard where he lets them fight it out, each having first solemnly promised to abide the result."

"Is that true, baronet?"

"Perfectly true," replied Sir William; "but I fear that like some of your wise and impartial proceedings here, it will soon work its own cure. The business has increased so damnably—this dispensation of justice I mean—on my hands, that my stable yard resembles a fives court rather than anything else I know. The method harmonizes with their habits so beautifully, that if there is an angry word between them it is only 'd—n you, are you for Sir W.?' 'Yes, you villain, step out.' They accordingly come, and as they touch their hats, I ask, well, my good fellows, what do you want now? 'Not law, Sir William, but justice—the cudgels, plase your honor.' In the beginning I was in the habit of making them relate the cause of quarrel first, and then fight it out afterwards, but experience soon taught me that all this was a mere waste of time. In general now, I pass all that by; the complainants have their comfortable fight, as they say, and go home perfectly satisfied."

"Here, you secretary, what the devil are you at there? Why d——e, it wasn't to toss half crowns with that rascal of a treasurer you came here, sir; let us get through the business, and then you may both toss off to the devil, where you'll go at last."

"Why," said the secretary, "I placed the papers all arranged in proper order before you."

"Yes, sir; I suppose you did; but who the devil can keep anything or anybody in order, in such a Babel as this? Beevor, I'll thank you to postpone the singing of your squib for the election; or take to the street when our business is over, and give it to the crowd."

"You be d——d, Spavin," replied Beevor; "I'll finish it, if the devil was at the back door."

"Darcy," said Deaker, addressing a thin, red-faced man beside him, "I saw a pretty bit of goods in Castle Cumber market on Thursday."

"Why, Deaker," replied the other, "is it possible that with one foot and more than half your body in the grave, and your shadow in h—l, you sinner, you have not yet given up your profligacy."

"Eat, drink, and be merry, Tom, for to-morrow we die; but about this pretty bit of goods—I tried to price her, but it wouldn't do; and when I pressed hard, what do you think of the little tit, but put herself under the protection of old Priest Roche, and told him I had insulted her."

"Who is she, Deaker?" inquired a young fellow with a good deal of libertine interest.

"Ah, Bob," replied Deaker, laughing; "there you are, one of the holy triad. Here, Baronet—did you ever hear what Mad Jollyblock, their father, the drinking parson of Mount Carnal, as some one christened his residence, said of his three sons?—and that chap there's *one* of them."

"No; let us hear it."

"'Dan,' said the father, speaking of the eldest, 'would eat the devil; Jack,' the second, 'would drink the devil; and Bob,'

this chap here, 'would both eat and drink him, in the first place, and outwit him afterwards.' That's Bob, the youngest—he there with a lip like a dropsical sausage. He has sent him here to pick up a little honesty, and much loyalty."

"And a great deal of morality," replied Bob, laughing, "from Deaker the virtuous."

"No, no," replied Deaker; "you need never leave your Reverend father's wing for that."

"Deaker, do you fleece the poor as much as ever?" replied Bob. "Ah, you are another sweet Agent, as times go. Do you touch them at the renewals as usual?"

"Egad, Bob, I was very good at that; but there's an unmatrimonial son of mine, Val the Vulture, there, and d—me, when I look back upon my life, and compare it with his, it's enough to make me repent of my humanity, to think of the opportunities I have neglected."

"Gentlemen," observed Hartley, "it strikes me, no matter what the multiplicity of other virtues we possess, there is somehow nothing like a superabundance of shame among us; we appear to glory in our vices."

"Why confound it, Hartley," replied Deaker, "where's the use of assuming what we do not and cannot feel? Would you have me preach honesty, who am as d——d a rogue as there is here? Indeed, with the exception of that whelp of mine, I believe the greatest—but that fellow's my master."

"Nobody can quarrel with your candor, Deaker, because it's all at your own expense," said the treasurer.

"Egad, and here it is at yours, Gilburne; with the exception always of myself and my son, you are the deepest rogue here—and I am very much afraid that your securities will be of my opinion when it is too late." He laughed heartily at this; and then, as usual, took to whistling his favorite tune of the Boyne Water.

Our readers may perceive that there was among them an open, hardy scorn not only of all shame, but of the very forms of common decency and self-respect. The feelings, the habits, the practices, the distribution of jobs and of jobbings, the exercise of petty authority, party spirit, and personal resentment, all went the same way, and took the same bent; because, in point of fact, there was in this little assembly of village tyrants, no such thing as an opposition—for three or four were nothing—no balance of feeling—no division of opinion—and consequently no check upon the double profligacy of practice and principle, which went forward under circumstances where there existed a complete sense of security, and an utter absence of all responsibility.

"Gentlemen, we are losing a great deal of time unnecessarily," observed M'Clutchy, "let us first get through the business, and afterwards we will be more at leisure for this trifling. The bills for Harman are not yet found."

"Not found," replied Spavin, "why how soft you are, Val."

"Why they are not," reiterated Val.

"And why are they not?"

"Ask Counsellor Browbeater, the hard-faced barrister, that has the right of Black Trot in the Castle, and he will tell you."

"We all know that very well, Val, no thanks to your squeamishness," observed Deaker; "the truth is, he did not wish to let him out for a reason he has," he added, winking at the rest.

"Let us hear the calendar," said Hartley, "and get through the business as quickly as we can, secretary."

"Is that Browbeater," asked Sir William, "who was engaged in the spy system a little before I returned from England—a d——d scandalous transaction."

"The spy system, Sir William, is a very useful one to government," replied Val, "and they would be devilish fools if they did not encourage it."

"That may be your opinion, Mr. M'Clutchy," said Sir William, "and your practice, for aught I know; but, permit me to say, that it is not the opinion of a gentleman, a man of honor, nor of any honest man, however humble."

"I perfectly agree with you, Sir William," said Hartley, "and I despise the government which can stoop to such discreditable treachery, for it is nothing else. The government that could adopt such a tool as this Browbeater, would not scruple to violate the sanctity either of private life or public confidence, if it suited their interest—nay, I question whether they would not be guilty of a felony itself, and open the very letters in the post-office, which are placed there under the sacred seal of public faith. However, never mind; proceed with the calendar."

"Here is the case of some of your wreckers, M'Clutchy, charged here with illegally, maliciously, and violently pulling down several houses in the village of Crockaniska—assaulting and maltreating the unoffending inhabitants."

"Halt there a moment," said Val; "rebels, every man of the said inhabitants, which I can prove. My men, who are remarkable for their Protestantism and loyalty, went upon private information—"

"More of the spy system," said Hartley, smiling.

"Mr. Hartley, you may smile, but truth is

truth," replied Val; "we had private information that they had arms and rebellious papers, and the latter we have got under the thatch of their cabins."

"Private information!—still more of the spy system," repeated Hartley, smiling again.

"But not the arms?" asked Sir William.

"No, Sir William, not the arms; the rebels were too quick for us there."

"Then, they expected you it seems," observed Hartley; "and, if so, when taking away the arms, I am anxious to know why they should have been such fools as to leave the papers behind them."

"I am not here to account for their conduct, sir," replied Val, "but to state the facts as they occurred—they may, for instance, not have had time to bring them. It is not a month, for instance, since my fellows in Still hunting—and talking of that, Mr. Hartley, will you allow me to send you a couple of kegs of such stuff as is not to be had on every hill head; I offer it from pure good will, for I really regret that there should be any want of cordiality between our families."

"Our families," asked Hartley, with a look of surprise and indignation, "our families, sir! what do you mean?"

"Oh, damn it, Hartley, don't explode; I mean nothing offensive between us—then, dropping the families," said Val, fawningly, for he saw the other's nostril begin to dilate—

"And, you cowardly hound, why should you drop the families," inquired Deaker, taking fire; "do you forget, sirra, who your father was?"

"And do you forget, sirra," resumed Hartley, "who your mother is?"

"Damn it," replied Val, still with fawning good-humor, "how am I accountable for their conduct before I had existence? I neither made them as they were, nor as they are."

"Then have the modesty," said Hartley, "to forbear any allusion to them, especially in the way of comparison."

"For one of them, Hartley, I reply," said Deaker, "that he is of a better family than yourself; and don't imagine, my worthy fellow, that however you may browbeat others, you will be permitted to bully or browbeat me. I say, sir, there is better blood in my veins than ever ran through yours."

"I had no intention of bullying or browbeating any man here," replied Hartley, "much less one whose age and virtues must prevent him—"

"Not from meeting you like a man," said Deaker; "old as I am, I can yet stand my ground, or if not, d—n me, I can tie a stake to my bottom, and you may take that as a proof that I won't run away."

"Nobody suspects you for that," said the other. "Out of the long catalogue of human virtues, courage is the only one left you, or indeed, you ever had—unless, indeed, it be the shameless and diabolical honesty of glorying in your own vices."

"Why, Hartley," replied Deaker, "you forget that you had more vices, and hammers, too, in your family, and more brass, than ever I or mine could boast of. If the memory of that successful old tinker, your grandfather, had not passed out of your mind, you would make no allusion to vices or screws, and take care, my good hot-brained young fellow, that you don't die in your family trade, and come to the pully yet."

Hartley, who was hasty, but exceedingly good-natured, although certainly a noted duelist, now burst out into a hearty laugh, as did most of the rest.

"Deaker," said he, "there is no use in being angry with you, nor in being ashamed that my fortune was created by industry and honesty, for both of which virtues I have reason heartily to thank my good old grandfather, the hardware man, as you have for thanking the sire of your father, the worthy tailor, who had the honor of being appointed one of Peg Nicholson's knights, ha, ha, ha!"

The laughter now became general and excessive; but not one of them enjoyed, or seemed at least, to enjoy it with more good-humor than Val; who, indeed, was never known to exhibit any want of temper to his equals during his life.

"Well," said he, "ha, ha, ha! now that *that* breeze has blown over—about the poteen, Hartley?"

"Thanks, Val; but no poteen, if you please."

"Then, gentlemen," said Val, "to resume business; I was alluding to the seizure of a Still about a month ago near Drum Dhu, where the parties just had time to secure the Still itself, but were forced to leave the head and worm behind them; now, *that* I give as a fair illustration of our getting the papers, and missing the arms. Besides," said he, in a wheedling and confidential tone, addressed to a clique of his friends, the jobbers, whom he joined at the lower end of the room, "you are all aware that my fellows are staunch Orangemen, every one of them, and the government itself feels, for I have reason to know it, that it is neither politic or prudent to check the spirit which is now abroad among them; so far from that, I can tell you it is expected that we should stimulate and increase it, until the times change. The bills against these men must, therefore, be thrown out."

"I'll agree to that," said a leading man of his own party, "only on one condition. There are three of my own tenants, Papists to be sure, *in* for distilling poteen. Now, we must have them out, Val, for one good turn deserves another."

"But why?" inquired Val and his friends.

"Why, simply, because the poor fellows were distilling for myself," he replied; "all the apparatus were mine, and I can't think of allowing them to be transported for my own act."

"Very well, then; a bargain be it," said Val, "so out they go."

Whilst every man was thus working, either for his friends or against his enemies, or not unfrequently both, Hartley, who, in point of fact, felt always anxious to do as much good as he could, addressed Sir William:

"Have *you* no friends in difficulty, Sir William, or who require your advocacy now? I see the jobbers are hard at work. Some working heaven and earth to wreak the vengeance of law upon their enemies; others quite as anxious to turn aside *justice* from their friends."

"Eh! what's that!" said Sir William, starting up; "come, Hartley, you are right; there are four of my tenants in for a fray—the M'Caffreys, and the poor devils stand no chance with such a jury as they will have. I hear them named below there—so let us join the jobbers as you say, and see if we cannot get the Bills thrown out."

"Very well," said Val, as they approached him, "the M'Caffreys go to trial."

"Sir William, excuse me," said Hartley; "will you allow me to interfere, in the first instance?"

"My dear fellow, certainly, with great pleasure, and I shall aid you as far as I can."

"Val," said Hartley, in that kind of familiar tone which he knew would go far with such a man as M'Clutchy, and which was in such accordance with his own natural good-humor—"Val, my good fellow, and the best man of business here, by the way, notwithstanding the poteen affair, I want you to stand my friend and also Sir William's here."

"How is that, Hartley?"

"There are four men in from the Mountain Bar, named M'Caffrey. Now we want to have the Bills against them ignored; and simply for a plain reason—at this season of the year any lengthy imprisonment would ruin them. It was a faction fight or something of that kind, and of course there is no feeling of a religious or party nature in it. Am I not right, Sir William?"

"Perfectly; the thing took place during my absence in England for the last few months. Had I been at home, the matter would have been peaceably decided in my own stable-yard."

"Yes," observed Val, "but it appears there was a man's life in danger."

"Yes, but, sir, his life is now out of danger."

"Well, but does not this," rejoined Val in his most serious mood, "look very like obstructing the course of justice?"

"Why, you d—d scoundrel," said the Baronet, "what, in nineteen cases out of twenty, is done at every assizes where matters connected with religion or politics are concerned, that ought not to be called obstructing the course of justice?"

"We shall return true Bills, Sir William; and that is the only reply I have to make, except to thank you for your courtesy."

"Mr. M'Clutchy," said Hartley, "I know your good sense and forbearance, both of which are so creditable to you. These poor fellows will be ruined, for both you and I know what kind of jury that is to try them."

"An honest jury, Mr. Hartley," said Mr. M'Clutchy, who was now beginning to feel a little of his power—"an honest jury, Mr. Hartley."

"I give you leave to say so, Val; but, in the meantime, I will accept one favor from you, if you grant me two."

"How is that sir?" asked Val.

"Send me that poteen you spoke of, and *ignore* the Bills against these M'Caffreys."

"No, sir," replied Val, looking with his own peculiar beetle-browed smile at Sir William, "I shall not; for by G—, we will find true Bills against the four M'Caffreys. We might do something for humanity, Mr. Hartley; but we are not to be made fools of before our own faces."

"I do not understand you," replied Hartley.

"He is nothing but a scoundrel, as I said," returned Sir William—"that is all; a low-born scoundrel; and it is a disgrace to see such a fellow's name upon any Grand Jury list."

"Hartley," replied Spavin, "we do not wish to refuse either Sir William or you such a matter as this; but the fact is, M'Clutchy is right. This is at bottom a party matter—a political matter, and you know it is."

"No, sir; on my own part and on Sir William's I disclaim any such knowledge."

"You know, Hartley, you are canvassing the county."

"Yes, but what has that to do with these men or their affairs?"

"What—why you know that if we ignore the Bills against them, they will be out and ready to vote for you at the forthcoming election."

Hartley looked at him with surprise but said nothing.

"Now," he proceeded, "I will tell you what we will do. If you and Sir William pledge your words, as men of honor, that you will not accept the votes of these men, the matter you wish shall be managed."

Sir William started to his feet.

"Great God," said he, "is it not monstrous that an oath of secrecy should bind us to conceal these inquiries?"

"It is montrous, Sir William," replied his friend; "I do believe there is not such a scene of shameless and hardened corruption on earth, as a Grand Jury Room at the present day."

This, however, they said rather aside to each other.

"No, sir," replied Hartley to the last proposal, "neither I nor Sir William shall enter into any such shameful compromise. I felt perfectly satisfied of the slight chance of justice which these poor men had, and will have from a jury so composed as theirs I know will be; and that was the reason why I did not hesitate to try, if I could, with any effect, save them from what I now perceive is designed for them—a political punishment independent of crime."

"Never mind," said Sir William, taking him aside, "never mind, Hartley; we will be able to defeat them yet. I shall send for the prosecuting parties; get them to withdraw proceedings, and immediately fight it out in my lawn or stable-yard."

After a great deal of similar squabbling and negotiation, the gentleman at length got through the criminal calendar for the county, and with still more startling honesty and disinterestedness, entered upon the transactions of its fiscal business. Deaker, whenever he took no part in the discussions that accompanied the settlement of each question, sat reading a newspaper to the air of the Boyne Water, which he whistled from habit in a low manner that was scarcely audible, unless to some one who felt anxious to derive amusement, as several did, from the originality of the performance.

"Gentlemen," said the secretary, "here is a list of the presentments. The first is—For two miles and a quarter of a new road, running from George Ganderwell's house at the Crooked Commons, out along Pat Donnellan's little farm of the Stripe, through which it runs longitudinally; then across Jemmy Teague's meadow, over the Mullin Burn, then through widow Doran's garden, bisecting Darby M'Lorrinan's three acre field, afterwards entering the Glebe, and passing close to the lodge of the Rev. Phineas Lucre's avenue."

"Is there any opposition to this?" inquired the chairman.

"Read the next," said M'Clutchy, "and then we shall be the better able to see."

No. 2. "For four miles of road, commencing at the Ban 'Ard river, which it crosses, running through Frank Fagan's croft, along Rogues Town, over Tom Magill's Long-shot meadow, across the Sally Slums, up Davy Aiken's Misery-meerin, by Parra Rakkan's haggard, up the Dumb Hill, into Lucky Lavery's Patch, and from that right ahead to Constitution Cottage, the residence of Valentine M'Clutchy, Esq., within two hundred yards of which it joins the high road to Castle Cumber."

"Now the question is," said Val, "can both these be passed during this term?"

"Val," replied young Jollyblock, "if ever a man was afflicted with modesty and disinterestedness you are he; and well becomes me the parson, too, in his share of the job; but it's all right, gentlemen. Work away, I say. The Parson-magistrate, and the Agent-grand-juror have set us an excellent example—ha—ha—ha! Deaker, drop whistling the Boyne Water there, and see what's going on here."

"No," said Deaker, "there never was such air composed as the Boyne Water; and my only request is, that I may die whistling it. Damn it, Jollyblock, unless a man is a good Protestant he's bad for everything else."

"But how the devil Deaker, can you call yourself a good Protestant, when you believe in nothing?"

"Why," said Deaker, "I believe that a certain set of political opinions are necessary for our safety and welfare in *this* world; and, I believe, that these are to be found in the Church, and that it is good Protestantism to abide by them, yes, and by the Church too, so long as she teaches nothing but politics, as she does, and acts up to them."

"And does your faith stop there?"

"How could it go farther with the lives of such men as your father and Lucre staring me in the face? Precept, Dick, is of little value when example is against it. For instance, where's the use of men's preaching up piety and religion, when their own conduct is a libel upon their doctrine? Suppose, now, there are two roads—and 'tis said there are: No. 1, leading to an imaginary region, placed above; No. 2, to another imaginary region, placed below—very good; the parson says to you and to me, *do so and so*, and take the No. 1 road; but, in the meantime, he does himself the very reverse of this *so and so*, and takes the No. 2 road. Now, which are we to respect most, his advice or his example?"

"Let us go on," said Spavin, "perhaps there are others whose claims are as modest and disinterested; we shan't say anything about being as well founded. You secretary fellow, read away."

"Before you go any farther," said a droll-looking person named M'Small, "you must pass me a bridge over Lumlay's Leap. Our party voted you about thirty miles of roads to repair *thoroughly*, and you know that although you only *veneered* them, we said nothing."

"But," replied Val, "who ever heard of a bridge without water; and I know there's not a stream within three miles of you."

"Never mind that," replied M'Small, "let me have the bridge first, and we'll see what can be done about the water afterwards. If God in his mercy would send a wet winter next season, who knows but we might present for a new river at the January assizes."

"You must have it," said Deaker, "give M'Small the bridge, and, as he says, we'll see afterwards what can be done for a river for it."

"M'Small," said Hartley, "what if you'd get a presentment for a couple of mountain water spouts; who knows but it might answer the purpose?"

"I'm afraid," said M'Small, who, by the way, was a good deal of a humorist, "I fear, Hartley, that the jurisdiction of the grand panel would scarcely reach so high. In the meantime I shall think of it."

The bridge, however, was not only passed, but built, and actually stands to this day, an undeniable monument of the frugality and honesty of grand jurors, and the affection which they were then capable of bearing to each other, when their interests happened to be at stake, which was just four times in the year.

In the meantime, the tumultuous battle of jobs, in all its noise, recrimination, and jangle of conflicting interests, and incredible selfishness commenced. There were strong mutual objections to pass the roads to Mr. Lucre and M'Clutchy, and a regular conflict between their respective partisans accordingly took place. M'Clutchy's party were absolutely shocked at the grossness and impiety of such a man as Mr. Lucre, a person of such great wealth, an absentee, a non-resident rector, dipping his hand in the affairs of the county for the sake of a job.

His party, for he had a strong one, dwelt upon his rights as a civil officer, a magistrate, and justice of quorum—upon his sterling principles as a loyal Protestant, who had rendered very important services to the Church and the government. It was such as he, they said, who supported the true dignity and respectability of Protestantism, and it would be a scandal to refuse him a road to his glebe. Deaker groaned several times during this eulogium, and repeated his favorite text—let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die; but whether its application was designed for Lucre or himself, was not very easy—perhaps we should rather say difficult to determine.

"That is all very true," replied Val's party; "but in the meantime, it would be quite as creditable for him to pay some attention to the spiritual interests of his parish, and the condition of its tottering old church, as to be mulcting the county for a job."

"What can *you* know about his church," inquired Spavin, "who have never been seen in it, except on last Easter Monday, when you were candidate for the church wardenship? M'Clutchy," he added, "we all know you are a Protestant of your father's color; it's the best Protestantism that puts most into your pocket."

"And on what other principle is Lucre himself now proceeding, or has ever proceeded?" replied Val's friends—for Val himself had always a wholesome repugnance to personal discussion.

In fact, one would have imagined, on hearing Val's party declaiming against the selfishness of Lucre, that they themselves entertained a most virtuous horror against jobs and corruptions of all kinds, and had within them an actual *bona fide* regard for religion, in all its purity, spiritual beauty, and truth; whilst on the contrary, the Lucreites, who certainly had the worst cause, seemed to think that M'Clutchy, in preferring his own corruption to that of the parson, was guilty of a complete desertion of that sterling and mutually concessive Protestant feeling which they considered to constitute its highest principle, and absolutely to merge into the manifestation of something inimical to a Protestant government.

At length it was suggested by him of the bridge, that in order to meet the wishes of two such excellent men, and such admirable representatives of pure Protestant virtue and spirit, it would be best to pass both presentments on the present occasion, and drop or postpone some of the minor ones until next term—a suggestion which was eagerly received by both parties, inasmuch as it satisfied the rapacity of each, without giving a victory to either. This, however, was far from terminating either the business or the debates that arose out of the minor conflicting interests of the jurors. A good deal of hanging fire there was also, but given and returned in a better spirit, between Val's friends and Lucre's.

"Why doesn't Lucre," said the former, "afford us a little more of his company in the parish?"

"Ah," replied the Lucreites, "we suppose if he gave you more of his venison and claret, he would experience less of your opposition."

"I really am afraid to go to church," said Val, who, now that the storm had passed, resumed his usual insinuating habit of light sarcasm: "I am afraid to go, lest the crazy old church, which really, between ourselves —I speak of course in a friendly way now— is in a most shameful and dangerous state, should fall upon me."

"I did not think," said M'Small, "that you had such a strong sense of your own deserts left, Val!—I have some hopes of you yet."

"Ah," said Val, "I fear that on your way to heaven, if you meet a difficulty, you will not be likely to find a grand jury to build a bridge for you across it."

"'I perfectly agree with you," replied M'Small, "the face of a grand juror will be a novel sight in *that* direction."

"And in the other direction," observed Hartley, "no bridges will be wanted."

"Why so?" said M'Small.

"Because," he replied, "there will be such an absence of water as will render them unnecessary."

"Ay," retorted another, "but as there will be plenty of grand jurors we may do then as we did now, build the bridge without the water, and trouble ourselves no further with the consequences."

After much more conversation, partly on business, and partly on desultory topics, the quarrellings, and bickerings, and all the noisy enmities of that corrupt little world that is contained within—we should rather say, that *was* contained within the walls of a grand jury room, ceased; and, with the exception of one or two small matters of no consequence, everything was settled, but not so as to give general satisfaction; for there still remained a considerable number of grumblers, whose objects had been either completely lost in greater corruption, or set aside for the present.

"Here's another matter," said Spavin, "which we had better settle at once. A man here named O'Drive—Darby O'Drive—is to be appointed to the under gaolership—he is strongly recommended by Mr. Lucre, as a man that has renounced Popery."

"That's enough, Spavin," said Hartley, "that, I suppose, comprises all the virtues necessary for an under gaoler, at all events."

"You know him, M'Clutchy," said one or two of them.

"He'll make a good under gaoler," replied Val, "as there will be in Europe. Appoint him, gentlemen; you will get no such man."

"And that is just," said Sir William aside to Hartley, "all that Val's recommendation is good for."

And thus closed as much as we feel necessary to describe of that extraordinary scene —a grand jury room in the year 1804, or thereabouts.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A Rent Day—Relative Position of Landlord and Tenant—Grades of Tenantry—Phil's Notion of Respect—Paddy Corrigan's Protestant Wig—Phil and Solomon in a Fit of Admiration—The Widow Tyrrell.

One single week in the progress of time, after the exhibition last described, had wonderfully advanced the catastrophe of our simple and uncomplicated narrative. Harman, very much to the mortification of M'Clutchy, was acquitted, the evidence being not only in his favor, but actually of such a a character, as to prove clearly that his trial was merely one of those dishonest stretches of political vengeance which characterized the times. On coming out, however, he found the affairs of the firm in a state of bankruptcy and ruin. The insidious paragraphs in the papers, masked with compassion, and "a hope that the affairs of this respectable firm—which was hitherto supposed to be a solvent one—would, still, be wound up in a way, they trusted, somewhat more satisfactory than was given out by their enemies." Nor was this the worst, so far as Harman himself was concerned. The impression of Mary M'Loughlin's perfidy had been now so thoroughly stamped into his heart, that he neither could, nor would listen to any attempt upon the part of their mutual friends at her vindication. This last stroke of anguish was owing, also, to Phil's diabolical ingenuity. Harman on reflecting day after day, and hour by hour, upon the occurrence, and comparing it with her conduct and confusion on previous occasions, felt, as we before said, strongly inclined to believe her guilty. He determined, however, not to rest here, but to sift the matter to the bottom. He accordingly heard from his cousin, and from several others, while in prison, such details of the particulars, and such an authentic list of the persons who were present, many of whom, owing to the ingenious malignity of Poll Doolin, were friendly and favorable to the family—that he privately sent for them, and on comparing the narratives one with the other, he found

the harmony among them so strong, that he gave up all thoughts of her, save such as recurred involuntarily to his mind with indignation and anguish. In addition to his other mortifications, it happened that the second day after his release from imprisonment was what the agents call "Gale day;" that is, the day upon which they get into their chair of state, as it were, and in all the insolence of office receive their rents, and give a general audience to the tenantry. Phil, indeed, even more than the father, looked forward to these days with an exultation of soul and a consciousness of authority, that fully repaid him for all the insults, disasters, and tweakings of the nose, which he was forced to suffer during the whole year besides. In truth, nothing could equal, much less surpass, the Pistolian spirit by which this lion-hearted gentleman was then animated. His frown, swagger, bluster, and authoritative shakings of his head, the annihilating ferocity of his look, and the inflated pomp of manner with which he addressed them, and "damned his honor," were all inimitable in their way. The father was more cautious and within bounds, simply because he had more sense, and knew the world better; but, at the same time, it was easy to see by his manner, that in spite of all his efforts at impartiality and justice, he possessed the poison as well as the wisdom of the serpent, but not one atom of the harmlessness of the dove. At another table, a little to the right of M'Clutchy, sat M'Slime, ready to take his appropriate part in the proceedings of the day, and prepared, whilst engaged in the task of seeing that everything was done according to law, to throw in "a word in season, touching the interests of the gospel."

At length eleven o'clock arrived, and found Val, Phil, our old friend Darby, who had not yet entered upon the duties of his office, together with one or two other understrappers, all ready for business. The two principal characters were surrounded by books, rentals, receipts, and every other document necessary and usual upon such occasions. The day was wet and cold, and by no means in the spirit of the season; but we know not why it happens, that there seems in general to be a fatality of disastrous weather peculiar to such days, leading one to imagine that the agent possessed such a necromantic foreknowledge of the weather, as enabled him to superinduce the severity of the elements upon his own cruelty. In a country so poor as Ireland, the scene presented by a rent day is one too impressive and melancholy ever to be forgotten by any heart touched with benevolence. There is little, if any, of that erect freedom of demeanor and natural exhibition of good will, which characterize conscious independence and a sense of protection on the part of the tenant; whilst on that of the agent or landlord there is a contemptuous hardness of manner, a vile indifference, and utter disregard of the feelings of those by whom he is surrounded, that might enable the shallowest observer to say at a glance, *there is no sympathy between that man and these people.*

But that is not all. Give yourself time to observe them more closely, listen to that agent pouring his insolent invective upon the head of this poor man, whose only crime is his poverty, and whose spirit appears to be broken down with the struggles and sufferings of life; yet, who hears his honesty impugned, his efforts ridiculed, and his character blackened, without manifesting any other than a calm spirit that looks inwards to his own heart for the consciousness of these falsehoods. Look at this, we repeat, and you will surely feel yourself forced to say—not that there is no sympathy between these men, *but there sits the oppressor and there stands the oppressed.*

But even this is not all. Bestow a still more searching glance upon the scene. Here is more than invective; more than the imputation of dishonesty and fraud; more than the cruel defamation of character in the presence of so many. Mark the words of that agent or landlord again. He is sealing the fate of this struggling man; he tells him he is to have no home—no house to shelter himself, his wife, and their children; that he must be dispossessed, ejected, turned out upon the world, without friends to support or aid him, or the means to sustain their physical existence. Hear all this, and mark the brow of that denounced man; observe how it knits and darkens; how firmly he compressess his lips, and with what a long, determined, gloomy gaze he surveys his denouncer—observe all this, we repeat; and need you feel surprised, at finding yourself compelled to go still farther, and say *there sits a doomed man and there most assuredly stands his murderer.*

Let it not be supposed that we are capable of justifying murder, or the shedding of human blood; but we are palliating, and ever shall palliate that crime in the humble man, which originates in the oppression of the great man. Is the act which banishes happiness and contentment—introduces poverty, misery, destitution—which scatters out of the heart all the little amenities and sweet endearments of life—which wastes away the strength of the spirit, and paralyzes that of the hand—which dims the eye and gives paleness to the cheek, and by combining all

these together makes home—yes, home, the trysting place of all the affections, a thing to be thought of only with dread—an asylum for the miseries of life;—is the act, we say, which inflicts upon a human being, or a human family, this scathing and multitudinous curse—no crime? In the sight of God and in the sight of man is it no crime? Yes! In the sight of God and man it is a deep, an awful, and a most heartless crime! To return, however, to our rent day. The whole morning was unseasonably cold and stormy, and as there was but little shelter about the place, we need scarcely say, that the poor creatures who were congregated before the door were compelled to bear the full force of its inclemency.

Indeed, it may be observed with truth, that when people are met together under circumstances of a painful nature, they cannot relax or melt into that social ease which generally marks those who come together with no such restraint upon the heart or spirits. Here, too, as in every other department of life, all the various grades of poverty and dependence fall into their respective classes. In one place, for instance, might be seen together those more comfortable farmers who were able to meet their engagements, but who labored under the galling conviction, that, however hard and severely industry might put forth its exertions, there was no ultimate expectation of independence—no cheering reflection, that they resided under a landlord who would feel gratified and proud at their progressive prosperity. Alas! it is wonderful how much happiness a bad landlord destroys! These men stood with their backs to the wind and storm, lowly conversing upon the disastrous change which was coming, and had come, over the estate. Their brows were lowered, their dialogue languid and gloomy, and altogether their whole appearance was that of men who felt that they lived neither for themselves or their families, but for those who took no interest whatsoever in their happiness or welfare.

In another place were grouped together men who were still worse off than the former—men, we mean, who were able to meet their engagements, but at the expense of all, or mostly all, that constitutes domestic comfort—who had bad beds, bad food, and indifferent clothes. These persons were far more humbled in their bearing than the former, took a less prominent situation in the crowd, and seemed to have deeper care, and much more personal feeling to repress or combat. It is an indisputable fact, that the very severe and vexatious tyranny exercised over them had absolutely driven the poor creatures into hypocrisy and falsehood—a general and almost uniform consequence of conduct so peculiarly oppressive. They were all, at best, God knows, but very poorly clothed; yet, if it so happened that one or two of them, somewhat more comfortable than the rest, happened to have got a new coat a little before gale day, he invariably declined to appear in it, knowing, as he did, that he should receive a torrent of abuse from the agent, in consequence of "getting fat, impudent, and well-dressed on his Lordship's property;" terms of abuse, which, together with the cause that produced them, are at this moment well known to thousands as expressions whose general occurrence on such occasions has almost fixed them into proverb. Will our English neighbors believe this? That we know not, but we can assure them that they may.

There were other groups farther down in the scale of distress, where embarrassment and struggle told a yet more painful tale; those who came with their rent, in full to be sure, but literally racked up from their own private destitution—who were obliged to sell the meal, or oats, or wheat, at a ruinous loss, in order to meet the inexorable demands of the merciless and tyrannical agent. Here were all the external evidences of their condition legible by a single look at their persons; they also herded together, ill clad, ill fed, timid, broken down, heartless. All these, however, had their rents—had them full and complete in amount; and now the reader may well say, this picture is, indeed, very painful, and I am glad it is closed at last. Closed! oh, no, kind reader, it is not closed, nor could it be closed by any writer acquainted either with the subject or the country. What are we to say of those who had *not* the rent, and who came there only to make that melancholy statement, and to pray for mercy? Here was raggedness, shivering—not merely with the cold assault of the elements—but from the dreaded apprehension of the terrible agent—downcast looks that spoke of keen and cutting misery—eyes that were dead and hopeless in expression—and occasionally, a hasty wringing of the hands, accompanied by an expression so dejected and lamentable, as makes us, when we cast our eye in imagination upon such men as Valentine M'Clutchy, cry out aloud, "where are the lightnings of the Almighty, and why are his thunderbolts asleep?" There was there the poor gray-haired old man—the grandfather—accompanied, perhaps, by his promising young grandsons, left fatherless and motherless to his care, and brought now in order that the agent might see with his eyes how soon he

will have their aid to cultivate their little farm, and consequently, to make it pay better, he hopes. Then the widow, tremulous with the excess of many feelings, many cares, and many bitter and indignant apprehensions. If handsome herself, or if the mother of daughters old enough, and sufficiently attractive, for the purposes of debauchery, oh! what has she to contend with? Poor, helpless, friendless, coming to offer her humble apology for not being able to be prepared for the day. Alas! how may she, clutched as she is in the fangs of that man, or his scoundrel and profligate son—how may she fight out the noble battle of religion, and virtue, and poverty, against the united influences of oppression and lust, wealth and villany.

The appearance of these different groups —when the inclemency of the day, their sinking hearts, and downcast pale countenances, were taken into consideration—was really a strong exponent of the greatest evil which characterizes and oppresses the country—the unsettled state of property, and of the relative position of landlord and tenant in Ireland.

At length the hall-door was opened, and a hard-faced ruffian came out upon the steps, shouting the name of a man named O'Hare. The man immediately approached the steps, and after shaking the heavy rain out of his big coat, and having whisked his hat backwards and forwards several times, that he might not soil his honor's office, he was brought in, and having made his humble bow, stood to hear his honor's pleasure. His honor, however, who had divided the labor between himself and Phil, had also, by an arrangement which was understood between them, allotted that young gentleman, at his own request, a peculiar class marked out in the rental, in which class this man stood.

"O'Hare," said Val, "how do you do?"

"Upon my conscience, your honor, but poorly," replied O'Hare, "the last heavy fit of illness, joined to the bad times, sir—"

"O'Hare," said Solomon, "suffer me humbly, and without assuming anything to myself, to point out to you the impropriety of swearing; I do it, my friend, in all humility; for I fear, that so long as you indulge in that most sinful practice, the times will seldom be other than bad with you, or, indeed, with any one that gives way to so wicked a habit. Excuse me, O'Hare, I speak to you as a Christian, I humbly trust."

"By G—, that's good, father," exclaimed Phil, "M'Slime preaching to such a fellow as this!"

"I humbly thank you, sir," said O'Hare to Solomon, "for your kindness in—"

"Thank the devil, sirra," said Phil; "what the devil does he or I care about your d——d thanks. Have you your rent?"

The man, with trembling hands, placed some notes, and gold, and silver before him —the latter being rolled up in the former.

"I'm short for the present," he added, "just thirty shilling, sir; but you can give me an acknowledgment for the sum I give you now: a regular receipt will do when I bring you the balance, which, God willin', will be in about a fortnight."

"Ay, and this is your rent, Mr. O'Hare," exclaimed Phil, gathering up the money into a lump, and with all his force flinging it at the man's head; "this is your rent, *Mister* O'Hare," placing an emphasis of contempt on the word Mr.; "thirty shillings short, *Mr.* O'Hare, but I'll tell you what, *Mr.* O'Hare, by ——, if you don't have the full rent for me in two hours, *Mr.* O'Hare, I'll make short work, and you may sleep on the dunghill. I can in ten minutes get more rent than you pay, *Mr.* O'Hare, so now go to h—l, and get the money, or out you go."

The poor man stooped down, and with considerable search and difficulty, succeeded in picking up his money.

"In two hours, sir," said he, "I could never do it."

"That's your own business," said Phil, "not mine—if you have it not for me in two hours, out you go; so now be off to hell out of this, and get it."

Val, who had been poring over an account-book, now raised his head, as if disturbed by the noise for the first time:—

"What's the matter?" said he, "what is it, Phil?"

"Why, d—n my honor," replied Phil, "but that scoundrel O'Hare, had the assurance to come to me thirty shillings short of his rent, and, what is more, only brought me a part of it in gold!"

"God help me!" exclaimed poor O'Hare, "I know not what to do—sure I did the best I could."

He then went out to the hall, and was about to leave the house, when Val rising, called him into another room, where both remained for a few minutes, after which the man went away, thanking his honor, and praying God to bless him; and Val, having seated himself at the desk, appeared to feel rather pleased at their little interview than otherwise.

"Ah, my dear friend, M'Clutchy," said Solomon, "you are a treasure in your way —when you do a kind act it is always in secret, ever mindful of our spiritual obligations, my friend."

"Why," said Val, "a man is not always to

trumpet forth any little act of kindness he may choose to render to a poor simple fellow like O'Hare. You mustn't mind him, Phil—I have told him not to be in a hurry, but to take his time."

"Very well," said Phil, who had just knowledge enough of his father's villany, to feel satisfied, that in whatever arrangement took place between them, O'Hare's interest was not consulted;* "very well; d—n my honor, I suppose it's all right, old cock."

Our readers, we presume, have already observed, that however tenderly our friend Solomon felt for the swearing habits of the poor, he was somehow rather reluctant in offering a word in season to any one else. What his motive could be for this we are really at a loss to know, unless it proceeded from a charitable consciousness, that as there was no earthly hope of improving them by admonition, it was only deepening their responsibility to give it—for Solomon was charitable in all things.

"Call in Tom Maguire, from Edenmore," said Val. "Now," he proceeded, "this is a stiff-necked scoundrel, who refuses to vote for us; but it will go hard, or I shall work him to some purpose. Well, Maguire," he proceeded, after the man had entered, "I'm glad to see you—how do you do?"

"I'm much obliged to you, sir," replied the other—"why just able to make both ends barely meet, and no more; but as the time goes, sure it's well to be able to do that same, thank goodness."

"Tom," said Solomon, "I am pleased to hear you speak in such a spirit; that was piously expressed—very much so indeed."

"Well, Tom," proceeded Val; "I suppose you are prepared?"

"Why, sir," replied Tom, who, by the way, was a bit of a wag; "you know, or at least Mr. M'Slime does, that it's good to be *always* prepared. The rent in full is there, sir," he added, laying it down on the table; "and I'll thank you for the receipt."

Val deliberately reckoned over the gold—for in no other coin would he receive it—and then drew a long breath, and appeared satisfied, but not altogether free from some touch of hesitation.

"Ay," said he, "it is all right, Tom, certainly—yes, certainly, it is all right. Darby, fill Tom a bumper of whiskey—not that—I say the large glass, you scoundrel."

"Throth, Captain, 'tisn't my heart 'ud hindher me to give him the largest in the house; but I have a conscientious scruple against doin' what I believe isn't right. My Bible tells me——. Well, well, sure I'm only obeying orders. Here, Tom," he added, handing him the large bumper.

"Confound the fellow," said Val; "ever since he has become a convert to Mr. Lucre, there's no getting a word out of him that hasn't religion in it."

"Ah, Captain," replied Darby, "sure Mr. M'Slime there knows, that 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth spaiketh.'"

"I cannot answer for what you are latterly, Darby," replied Solomon—"thank you, Tom," to Maguire, who had held his glass in his hand for some time, and at length hurriedly drank their healths;—"but I know that the first spiritual nutrition you received, was at least from one who belonged to an Apostolical Church—a voluntary Presbytery—unpolluted by the mammon of unrighteousness, on which your Church of Ireland is established."

"But you know," said Darby, "that we're ordhered to make for ourselves friends of that same mammon of unrighteousness."

"Upon my honor," said Phil, "I know that you're a hypocritical old scoundrel. Be off to h—l, sir, and hold your tongue."

"Throth and I will, Captain Phil—I will then," and he was silent; but his face, as he glanced first at Tom Maguire, and then at Solomon and the rest, was a perfect jewel, beyond all price.

"Tom," proceeded Val, "I hope you've thought over what I mentioned to you on our canvass the other day?"

"I have, sir," said Tom, "and I'm still of the same opinion. I'll vote for Hartley and no other."

"You don't imagine of what service Lord Cumber and I could be of to you."

"I know of no service Lord Cumber ever was to any of his tenants," replied Maguire; "except, indeed, to keep them ground to the earth, in supportin' his extravagance, and that he might spend their hard earnings in another country, not caring one damn whether they live or starve. It's for that raison, sir, I vote, and will vote against him."

"Well, but," said Val, whose brow began to darken, "you have not considered what an enemy he can be to those like you, whose obstinacy draws down his resentment upon them. Have you ever considered that—eh?"

"I don't see how he can readily be a worse enemy to me, or any tenant he has, than he is at present. I'll trouble you for my receipt, Mr. M'Clutchy, but I won't vote for him. I beg your pardon, sir," said he, on looking at the receipt which Val, as he spoke, had handed to him; "this isn't signed—your name's not to it."

"Show," said Val; "upon my life it is not.

* This scene is verbatim et literatim from life.

You are right, Maguire; but the truth is, M'Slime, that while speaking on any subject that affects Lord Cumber's interests, I am scarcely conscious of doing anything else. Now, sir," he proceeded, addressing Maguire, with a brow like midnight; "there is your receipt—bring it home—show it to your family—and tell them it is the last of the kind you will ever receive on the property of Lord Cumber. I shall let you know, sir, that I am somewhat stronger than you are."

"That's all to be proved yet, sir," said the sturdy farmer: "you know the proverb, sir—'man proposes, but God disposes.'"

"What do you mean, sirra? What language is this to my father? Be off to h—l or Connaught, sir, or we'll make it worse for you—ha!—bow-wow." He did not utter the last interjection, but his face expressed it.

"That's not the religious individual I took him to be," said Solomon; "there is much of the leaven of iniquity in him."

"Religion be hanged, M'Slime!" said Phil, "what religion could you expect a Papist like him to have?"

"M'Murt, call in old Paddy Corrigan."

A venerable old man, who, though nearly a hundred years old, stood actually as erect as the Apollo Belvidere himself, now entered. He was, however, but poorly clad, and had nothing else remarkable about him, with the exception of a rich wig, which would puzzle any one to know how it had got upon *his* head. On entering, he took off his hat as usual, and paid his salutation.

"What the devil do you mean, Corrigan?" said Phil, once more in a fluster; "what kind of respect is that in our presence?—what kind of respect is that, I say? Take off your wig, sir."

"With great respect to you, sir," replied Corrigan, "I have been in as jinteel company as this, and it's the first time ever I was axed to take my *wig* off."

"Phil," said Val, who really felt somewhat ashamed of this ignorant and tyrannical coxcomb, "Phil, my good boy, I think you are rather foolish—never mind him, Paddy, he is only jesting."

"Are not you the man?" asked Solomon, "in whom our rector, Mr. Lucre, takes such a deep and Christian interest?"

"I am, sir," returned Corrigan.

"And pray, what interest does he take in you?" said Val.

"Troth, sir," replied Paddy, "he is very kind and very good to me. Indeed, he's the generous gentleman, and the good Christian, that doesn't forget Paddy Corrigan."

"But, Paddy, what does he do for you?" asked the agent.

"Why, sir," replied Corrigan, "he gives me a cast-off wig once a year, God bless him!—This is his I have on me. Throth, ever since I began to wear them I feel a strong relish for beef and mutton, and such fine feedin'; but somehow, God forgive me, I haven't the same leanin' to devotion that I used to have."

"Paddy, my old boy," said Phil, "that alters the case altogether. I thought the wig was as Popish as yourself; but had I known that it was a staunch and constitutional concern, of sound High Church principle, I should have treated it with respect. I might have known, indeed, that it could not be a Popish one, Paddy, for I see it has the thorough Protestant curl."

The father looked at Phil, to ascertain whether he was serious or not, but so unmeaning or equivocal was the expression of his countenance that he could make nothing out of it.

"You are reasoning," said Solomon, "upon wrong, certainly not upon purely gospel principles, Phil. The wig at this moment has a great deal more of Popery in it than ever it had of Protestantism."

"And, if I'm not much mistaken, more honesty, too," observed Val, who had not forgotten the opposition he received in the grand jury room by Lucre's friends; nor the fact that the same reverend gentleman had taken many fat slices of his mouth on several other occasions.

"Well, then, confound the wig," said Phil, "and that's all I have to say about it."

Paddy then paid his rent, and having received a receipt, was about to go, when Val thus addressed him:—

"Paddy, I hope you will not hesitate to give up that farm of yours at Slatbeg; I told you before that if you do, I'll be a friend to you for life."

"I'll sell it, sir," said Paddy; "but surely you wouldn't have me to give up my interest in such a farm as that."

"I'll make it up to you in other ways," said Val; "and I'll mention you besides to Lord Cumber."

"I'm thankful to you, sir," said Paddy; "but it's in heaven I'll be, most likely, before ever you see his face."

"Then, you won't give it up, nor rely upon my generosity or Lord Cumber's? It's Lord Cumber you will be obliging, not me."

"Wid every respect for you both, sir," replied Paddy, "I must think of my own flesh and blood, my childre, and grand-childre, and great-grand-childre, before I think of either you or him. The day, sir, you made me tipsy, and sent me on your own car for the lease, I would a given it—but then, they

wouldn't let me at home, and so, on thinking it over—"

"Pooh, you're doting, man, you're doting," said Val. "Go home, now—but I tell you, you will have cause to remember this before you die, old as you are—go home."

"The truth is, Solomon, I was offered two hundred pounds for it by one of my 'hounds' which would be a good thing enough, and would afford you a slice into the bargain. The old fellow would have brought me the lease the day he speaks of, were it not for the family—and, talking of leases, you will not forget to draw up those two for the O'Flaherties, with a flaw in each. They are certainly with us up to the present time, but, then, we can never be sure of these Papists."

"No, d—n my honor, if ever we can," re-echoed Phil; "they hate us because we keep them down. Put in two good thumping flaws, Solomon, and be hanged to you; so that we can pop them out if ever they refuse to vote for us."

"Never you mind Solomon," said his father, "Solomon will put in a pair of flaws that will do him honor."

"If I did not feel that in doing so, my dear M'Clutchy, I am rendering a service to religion, and fighting a just and righteous fight against Popery and idolatry, I would not deem myself as one permitted to do this thing—but the work is a helping forward of religion, and that is my justification."

"Call Philip Duggan in."

A poor looking man now entered with a staff in his hand, by the aid of which he walked, for he was lame.

"Well, Duggan, your rent?"

"I have scrambled it together, sir, from God knows how many quarthers."

"Phil," said Solomon aside, "is it not painful to hear how habitually these dark creatures take the sacred name in vain."

"By ——, it's perfectly shocking," said Phil, "but what else could you expect from them?"

"Duggan," said Val, "what is this, here's a mistake—you are short three pound ten."

"Beggin' your pardon, sir, it's all right," replied Duggan; "you see, your honor, here's my little account for the work I wrought for you for five weeks wid horse and cart, up until I put my knee out o' joint in the quarry—you remember, sir, when I brought it to you, you said to let it stand, that you would allow for it in the next gale."

"I remember no such thing, my good fellow, or, if ever I said such a thing, it must have been a mistake; do you imagine, now—are you really so stupid and silly as to imagine that I could transmit this account of yours to Lord Cumber, in payment of his rent?"

"But wasn't it by your own ordhers I did it, sir?"

"No, sir; it couldn't be by my orders. Duggan, you're a great knave, I see. I once had a good opinion of you; but I now perceive my error. Here you trump up a dishonest bill against me, when you know perfectly well that most of the work you charge me with was *duty* work."

"Beggin' your pardon, sir, I paid you the duty-work besides, if you'll remember it."

"I tell you, sirra, you are a most impudent and knavish scoundrel, to speak to me in this style, and in my own office, too! Go and get the balance of the rent, otherwise you shall repent it; and, mark me, sirra, no more of your dishonesty."

"As God is to judge me——"

"Ah, my friend——," began Solomon.

"Be off to h—l, sir, out of this," thundered Phil. "Be off, I say, to h—l or Connaught; or if you don't, take my word for it, you'll find yourself in a worse mess. To address my father in such language! Be off, sir; ha!"—Bow-wow! said his face once more.

"Ah," said Solomon, when the man had retired, "I see your patience and your difficulties—but there is no man free from the latter in this checkered vale of sorrow."

"Call Roger Regan," said Val; "here's a fellow, now, who has an excellent farm at a low rent, yet he never is prepared with a penny. Well Regan."

"Oh! devil resave the penny, sir;—you must only prize (appraise) the craps; the ould game, sir—the ould game; however, it's a merry world as long as it lasts, and we must only take our own fun out of it."

"What is the matter with your head, Regan?" asked Val.

"Devil a much, sir; a couple o' cuts that you might lay your finger in. We an' the Hannigans had another set to on Thursday last, but be my sowl, we thrashed them into chaff—as we're well able to do. Will I have the pleasure of drinking your health, gintlemen? I think I see the right sort here."

"Give him a glass of spirits," said Val; "I think, Regan, you have seen some one drinking to-day already."

"Well, gintlemen, here's—if we're to have a short life, may it be a merry one!—and may we never ait worse mait than mutton! Mr. M'Slime, more power to you!—She's next door to me"—and he winked at Solomon—"an' barrin' the paleness, by the powers gettin' on famous; throth, sir," in reply to Val—"only share of two half-pints wid Paddy Colgan, in regard of that day that's in it—blowin' bullocks—and, I believe,

another half-pint wid Para Bellow. Blood, sir, but that's a beautiful drop! Sowl it would take the tear off a widow's pig—or the widow herself. Faith, Mr. M'Clutchy, I could tell where the cow grazes that was milked for that! Awough! However, no matther, I'm rantin' Regan from sweet Aughadarra—Regan the Rake that never seen to-morrow. Whish! more power!"

"That will do, Regan; you have not your rent."

"Oh! d—n the penny, as usual.—Success!"

"Well, but what's to be done? I must come down."

"Devil a foot you'll come down, please your honor; but you'll come up and prize the crap. It's worth five times the rent, at any rate—that's one comfort. Hurroo!"

"Upon my honor, Regan, I'm tired of this—I have done it several times through kindness to yourself and family, but I cannot, really, do it any more."

"Very well, sir—no offence—what one won't, another will; I can raise three times the rent on it in four and twenty hours."

"What an unfortunate man you are, to be sure. Well, Regan, I *shall* appraise your crops and take them, or a competent share of them, in payment, on *this* occasion—but mark me, it shall be the last."

"More power, I say.—Long life to you, sir. You know a hawk from a hand-saw, any how—and be my sowl, kind father, for you—whish! I'm rantin' Regan from sweet Aughadarra!"

So saying, poor, idle, drinking, negligent, pugnacious Regan, by his own sheer neglect, put his property into the hands of the most relentless harpy that ever robbed and fleeced a tenantry. This mode of proceeding was, in fact, one of the many methods resorted to by rapacious agents, for filling their own pockets at the expense of the tenant, who, by this means, seldom received more than a fourth part of the value of his crops. The agent under the mask of obliging him, and saving his crops from the hammer, took them at a valuation when the markets were low; and in order that he might be able to do so, he always kept over the tenant's head what is called a hanging gale—which means that he was half a year's rent in arrear. The crops were then brought home to the agent's place, and frequently, to save appearances, to the haggard of some friend of his, where they were kept until the markets got up to the highest price. So that it was not an unusual thing for the iniquitous agent to double the rent, one-half of which he coolly put into his own pocket.—In pastoral lands the butter was appraised in the same manner, and mostly with similar results to both parties. To return—when Regan had departed, Val asked Solomon what he thought of him.

"Think of him," said Solomon, who could not forgive the allusion to Susanna, "I would fain think of him as becomes a Christian; but, somehow, I could not help feeling, whenever I looked at him, there was the outline of an execution in his face; however, I may be mistaken—indeed, I hope—I trust I am—the villain!"

"M'Murt, call in Catharine Tyrrell."

"Yes," said Phil, "call in Widow Tyrrell. Now, Solomon, only you have no relish for anything except what's sanctified and spiritual, you would say that here comes such a specimen of Irish beauty as you have seldom seen."

"I never had any objection," said Solomon, who, in spite of all his gravity, betrayed an alertness on this occasion that was certainly not usual to him;—"I never had any objection to look upon any work from His hand, with pleasure. Indeed, on the contrary, I often felt that it raised my sense of—of what was beautiful, in such a way that my feelings became, as it were, full of a sweet fervor that was not to be despised; I will consequently not decline to look upon this comely widow—that is—in the serious light I mention."

"How do you do, Mrs. Tyrrell? I hope you have not got much wet?" said Val, turning round very blandly.

"Oh, Mrs. Tyrrell, I hope you're very well," followed Phil; "I fear you *have* got wet—have the goodness to take a chair, Mrs. Tyrrell—and a glass of wine, ma'am."

Mrs. Tyrrell took a chair, but she declined the glass of wine. Mrs. Tyrrell had been the wife of a young husband, who died in his twenty-fourth year, just when they had been about a year and a half married. She was herself, on the day in question, about the same age as her husband when he died. She had been a widow just two years, and had one child, a son. She was indeed a beautiful woman—in fact a very beautiful woman, as one could almost see in her humble condition of life. Her tresses were a raven black, but her skin was white and polished as ivory. Her face was a fine specimen of the oval—her brows exquisitely pencilled—and her large black, but mellow eyes, flashed a look that went into your very heart. But, if there was anything that struck you as being more fascinating than another, it was the expression of innocence, and purity, and sweetness, that lay about her small mouth and beautifully rounded chin. Her form was symmetry itself, and a glimpse of the small, but beautiful foot and ankle, left

no doubt upon the mind as to the general harmony of her whole figure. On this occasion there was a pensive air about her which added to the interest she excited; for, we believe, it may be truly observed, that beauty never appears so impressively or tenderly fascinating, as when it is slightly overshadowed with care. We need scarcely say, that there was a great deal of contrast in the gaze she received from Phil and our friend Solomon. That of Phil was the gross, impudent stare of a libertine and fool—a stare, which, in the eye of a virtuous woman, soon receives its own withering rebuke of scorn and indignation. That of Solomon, on the other hand, was a look in which there lurked a vast deal of cunning, regulated and sharpened by experience, and disguised by hypocrisy into something that absolutely resembled the open, ardent admiration of a child, or of some innocent man that had hardly ever been in the world. There was, however, a villainous dropping of the corners of the mouth, with an almost irrepressible tendency to lick the lips, accompanied with an exudation of internal moisture from the glands—vulgarly termed a watering of the teeth—which, to a close observer, would have betrayed him at once, and which were evident from the involuntary workings of his whole face.

"Mrs. Tyrrell," said Val, "I am glad to hear that you are making considerable improvements on your farm."

"Improvements, sir," replied the widow in amazement; "I don't know who could have told you that, sir. Didn't my potato crop fail altogether with me, and my flax, where I had it spread on the holme below, was all swept away by the flood."

"I am sorry to hear that, Mrs. Tyrrell;—we are very hard up for money here, and the landlord doesn't know on what hand to turn; I must raise a large sum for him forthwith:—indeed to tell you the truth, I have received instructions that are not at all pleasant to myself—I am to let no one pass, he says, and if I cannot get the rent otherwise, I am to enforce it. Now this is very unpleasant, Mrs. Tyrrell, inasmuch as it compels me to take steps that I shall feel very painful.

"God help me, then," replied the poor young woman, "for, as to rent, sir, I have it not; and, indeed, Mr. M'Clutchy, what brought me here to-day, was to ask a little time, just till I get my butter made up and sold.

"Yes, but what can I do, Mrs. Tyrrell? I have no power to let any one off, even where I feel inclined, as I do in your case. It really is not in my power; Lord Cumber took care to leave me no discretion in the business at all."

"But surely, sir, you don't mean to say, that unless I pay the rent, you will seize upon my property."

"This," said Val, as if to himself, "is really very distressing—unfortunately, Mrs. Tyrrell, I must indeed, unless you can raise the money in some way; wouldn't your friends, for instance, stand by you, until your butter is made up?"

"I have no such friends," replied the poor woman, "them that would, arn't able; and them that are able, won't; and that's only the way of the world, sir."

"It's too true, indeed, Mrs. Tyrrell; I am very sorry, exceedingly sorry, for what must be done. It is such circumstances as these that make me wish I never had become an agent."

"For God's sake, sir, have patience with me for about a month or six weeks, and I will be able to pay it all easily."

"If I was my own master," returned Val, "it would give me pleasure to do so, but I am not." Here there was a groan from Solomon of compassion for the poor widow, followed by a second, which was clearly a comment upon the first. What a pity, said the first, to see so interesting a young widow without the means of paying her rent—and is it not a wicked and hard-hearted world, said the second that has not in it one individual to befriend her! Mrs. Tyrrell looked round on hearing an expression of sympathy, and there was Solomon gazing on her with a look, in which admiration and sympathy were so well feigned, that she felt grateful to Solomon in her heart. As for Phil, whether he gazed at her, his father, or at the attorney, such was the comprehensive latitudinarianism of his squint, that she felt it impossible to tell; neither, indeed, did she care. She was now in tears, and Val having declared his determination to proceed, was silent, as if out of respect to her feelings. At length she rose up, and when on the eve of going out, she asked for the last time:—

"Mr. M'Clutchy is there no hope? I trust, sir, that when you consider how long my family and my husband have been living on this property, you'll think better of it than to bring myself and my poor orphan boy to beggary and ruin. What will become of him and myself!"

"D—n my honor, Mrs. Tyrrell, but I feel for you," said Phil, eagerly, as if rushing head foremost into a fit of the purest humanity.

"Do not be cast down, Mrs. Tyrrell," said Solomon, "there is one who can befriend the widow, and who will be a father to the

fatherless. Rely on Him!—who knows but an instrument may be raised up for you relief. Do not be thus cast down."

"No," said Phil, "do not, or you will only spoil them devlish fine eyes of yours, Mrs. Tyrrell, by crying. Come, come, father, you must give her the time she asks; upon my honor, I'll guarantee she won't disappoint you."

"And, if he is not sufficient, I will join him," said Solomon; "you may rest upon her word, my friend, for I am satisfied that no serious falsehood is in the habit of proceeding from a mouth so sweet and comely in expression, as Mrs. Tyrrell's. Come, Val, have a heart, and be compassionate towards the fair widow."

"If you or Phil will pay the money," said M'Clutchy, "well and good; but you both know, that otherwise it is out of my power."

There is a vast deal of acuteness of observation in Irish women, together with a quickness of perception, that sometimes resembles instinct. Mrs. Tyrrell's purity of feeling and good sense were offended at the compliments which the attorney and Phil mixed up with the sympathy they expressed for her. She felt something jar disagreeably upon her natural delicacy, by their selecting the moment of her distress for giving utterance to language, which, coming at any time from either of them to one in her station of life, was improper; but, under the present circumstances, an insult, and an impertinent trifling with her affliction.

"Well," said she, without paying them the slightest attention, "I must say, Mr. M'Clutchy, that if you proceed as you threaten to do, your conduct towards me and my poor orphan will be such as I don't think you can justify either to God or man. I wish you good morning, sir; I have no more to say upon it."

"Oh, Mrs. Tyrrell, if you begin to abuse us and lay down the law on the matter, I have no more to say either." She then went out, but had not left the hall, when Phil, following, said in a low, impudent, confidential tone—

"Don't be in a hurry, Mrs. Tyrrell, just step into the parlor for a few minutes, and we'll see what can be done—step in."

"No, sir," she replied, feeling very naturally offended at the familiarity of his manner, "I will not step in; anything you have to say you can say it here."

"Yes—but, then, they may overhear us. D—n my honor, but you're a very pretty woman, Mrs. Tyrrell, and I'd be sorry to see harsh proceedings taken against you—that is, if we could understand one another."

The scarlet hue of indignation had already overspread her face and temples, her eyes flashed, and her voice became firm and full.

"What do you mean, sir," she asked.

"Why," said he, "couldn't there be an understanding between us? In fact, Mrs. Tyrrell, you would find me a friend to you."

She made no reply but returned into the room.

"Mr. M'Clutchy," said she, "I thought that a woman—especially a poor, unprotected widow like me—might, at least, come into your house about her necessary business without being insulted; I thought that if there was one house above another where I ought to expect protection, it is yours. It's your duty, I think, to protect them that's livin' upon this property, and strugglin' to pay you, or him that employs you, the hard-earned rent that keeps them in poverty and hardship. I think, sir, it ought to be your duty, as I said, to protect me, and such as me, rather than leave us exposed to the abominable proposals of your son."

"How is this?" said Val; "where are you, Phil?"

Phil entered with a grin on him, that betrayed very clearly the morals of the father, as well as of himself. There was not the slightest appearance of shame or confusion about him; on the contrary, he looked upon the matter as a good joke, but, by no means, so good as if it had been successful.

"Phil," said his father, barely restraining a smile, "is it possible that you could dare to insult Mrs. Tyrrell under this roof?"

"D—n my honor, a confounded lie," replied Phil; "she wanted me to lend her the money, and because I did not, she told you I made proposals to her. All revenge and a lie."

Mrs. Tyrrell looked at him—"Well," said she, "if there is a just God in heaven, you will be made an example of yet. Oh! little they know that own this property, and every other property like it—of the insults, and hardships, and oppressions, that their tenantry must suffer in their absence from them that's placed over them; and without any one to protect them or appeal to for satisfaction or relief—sir, that villain in the shape of your son—that cowardly villain knows that the words he insulted me in are not yet cowld upon his lips."

"I have reason to put every confidence in what my son says," replied Val very coolly, "and he is not a villain, Mrs. Tyrrell—so I wish you a good morning, ma'am!"

This virtuous poor woman flushed with a sense of outraged modesty, with scorn and indignation, left the room; and with a dis-

tracted mind and a breaking heart, sought her orphan, whose innocent face of wonder she bedewed on her return home with tears of the bitterest sorrow.

It is not our intention to describe at full length the several melancholy scenes which occurred between poverty and dependence on one side, and cold, cruel, insolent authority, on the other. It is needless and would be painful to tell how much age and helplessness suffered at the hands of these two persons, especially at those of Phil, whose chief delight appeared to consist in an authoritative display of power and natural cruelty.

The widow had not been more than a minute gone, when the door opened, and in walked, without note or preparation, a stout swarthy looking fellow named M'Clean.

"Well, Tom," said Val, "is this you?"

"Brother M'Clean," said Solomon, "how are you?"

"What would ail me?" said M'Clean, "there's nothing wrong with me but what money could cure—if I had it."

"And you have no money, Tom!" said Val, smiling, "that, Tom, is a bad business—for we never wanted it more than we do at present. Seriously, have you the rent?"

"D—n the penny, brother M'Clutchy; and what's more, won't have it for at least three months."

"That's bad again, Tom. Any news?—any report?"

"Why, ay—there was a gun, or a pistol, or a pike, or something that way, seen with the Gallaghers of Kilscaddan."

"Ha—are you sure of that?"

"Not myself sure; but I heard it on good authority; but I think we had better make sure, by paying them a visit some night soon."

"We will talk about that," said Val; "but I am told that you treated priest Roche badly the other night. Is that true?"

"Why, what did you hear?" asked M'Clean.

"I heard you fired into his house; that you know was dangerous."

"All right," said Phil; "what right have Popish priests to live under a Protestant government? By my sacred honor, I'd banish them like wild cats."

"No," said M'Clean, in reply to Val, "we did not; all we did was to play 'Croppies lie Down,' as we passed the house, and fire three volleys *over* it—not *into* it; but if there was e'er a one among us with a bad aim you know, that wasn't his fault or ours; ha—ha—by Japers," said he in a low, confidential whisper, "we frightened the seven senses out of him, at any rate—the bloody Papist rascal—for sure they are all that, and be d——d to them."

"Capital doctrine—and so they are, Tom; right, Tom; so you frightened the bog Latin out of him! ha! ha! ha!"

"Ha—ha—ha—by my sowl we did, and more maybe, if it was known; I must be off now."

"Go and help yourself to a bumper of spirits before you go," said Val; "and, Tom, keep a sharp lookout, and whenever you find, or hear of arms, let me know immediately."

Tom only nodded to that, as he put the glass to his lips; "gentlemen," said he, "your healths; here's no Popery! no surrender!" saying which, he deposited the empty glass on the table, giving at the same time two or three short coughs occasioned by the strength of the liquor. "Good morning, gentlemen—brother, M'Slime"—he looked and nodded significantly at Solomon, then added—"good people are scarce; so be a good boy and take care of yourself."

"Now, Tom, be a good fellow and don't forget the rent," said Val; Tom nodded again, for it was a habit he had, and departed.

The next person who presented himself was a little, meagre, thin looking man, with a dry, serious air about him, that seemed to mark him as a kind of curiosity in his way. From the moment he entered, Solomon seemed to shrink up into half his ordinary dimensions, nor did the stranger seem unconscious of this, if one could judge by the pungent expression of his small gray eyes which were fastened on Solomon with a bitter significance that indicated such a community of knowledge as did not seem to be pleasant to either of them.

"Ah, Sam Wallace," said Val, "always punctual, and never more welcome than now; scraping and scrambling we are, Sam, to make up the demand for the landlord."

"What way ir ye, Mr. M'Clutchy; am gled to see ye luck so well; I a-am indeed."

"Thank you, Sam. How are all your family."

"Deed, as well as can be expected under the stain that's over us."

"Stain! What do you mean, Sam?"

"Feth, a main what's purty well known; that misfortune that befell our daughter Susanna."

"Dear me, Sam, how was that?"

"The way of it was this—she went as a children's maid into a religious femily"—here the two glittering eyes were fiercely fastened upon Solomon—"where she became a serious young person of decided piety, as

they call it—an' h—l till me, but another month will make it decided enough—well, sir, deel a long she was there till the saint, her masther, made a sinner of her, and now she's likely to have her gifts, such as they ir."

"I am very sorry to hear this, Sam; but, surely the man who seduced your daughter does not deserve to be called religious."

"Disn't he, feth? why, Lord bless you, sure it was all done in a religious way—they sang psalms together, prayed together, read the Bible together, and now the truth is, that the consequence will be speaking for itself some of these days."

Here another fiery look was darted at Solomon, who appeared deeply engaged among leases, papers, and such other documents as were before him.

"It's a bad business certainly, Sam—but now about the rent?"

"Hut! de'il a penny o' rent I have—hell take the tester; and yet, for all that, a'll pay you afore a laive the room—what do you think of that?"

"I don't understand it, Sam."

"Now," said Sam, going over to Solomon, "you'll pay Mr. M'Clutchy the sum of twelve pounds, fourteen, and three pence for me, Mr. M'Slime—if you please, sir."

There was a peremptory tone in his words, which, joined to the glittering look he riveted on Solomon, actually fascinated that worthy gentleman.

"My friend," replied Solomon, taking out his pocket-book, and seeming to look for a memorandum, "you have made a slight mistake against yourself; the sum, I find, is twelve pounds, seventeen, and three pence, so that you have made a slight mistake of three shillings, as I said, against yourself."

"Do you pay the half year's rent, which is the sum, I say, and you may give the three shillings in charity, which I know you will do."

"Shall I fill the receipt," asked Val, looking to Solomon.

"Fill it," said the other, "I am very glad I happened to have so much about me, poor man."

"So am I," returned Sam, significantly.

Solomon rose, and with all the calmness of manner which he could assume, laid the money down before M'Clutchy.

"Try," said he, "if that is right."

"Show here," said Sam, "a'll reckon them;" and having done so, he put one particular note in his pocket—"Never you mind," he added, addressing himself to Val, "I'll give you another note for this;" and he winked significantly as he spoke. He accordingly did so, and having paid the money and received his receipt, he bid them good-bye, once more winking, and touching his waistcoat pocket as he went. He had not been long gone, however, when Solomon once more examined his pocket-book, and in a tone which no pen could describe, exclaimed, "verily, the ways of Providence are wonderful! Will you look again at that money?" said he—"I have given away a note for ten pounds instead of a note for one."

"It is not here, then," replied Val, "but I'll venture to say that Sam, the knave, put it in his pocket when he made the exchange."

"Shall I call him back?" said Phil, "there he goes towards the gate."

"No," replied the other, "I have great reliance on Sam's honesty. He will return it no doubt on perceiving the mistake, or if not, I shall send to him for it. Yes, I know Sam is honest—truly the ways of Providence are wonderful."

So saying, with a visage peculiarly rueful and mortified, he closed his book and put it in his pocket.

The last person whom we shall notice was Brian M'Loughlin, on whose features care had recently made a deep impression. On being asked to sit, he declined—"I thank you," said he, "my visit will be but a short one, and what I have to say, I can say standing."

"That as you please, Mr. M'Loughlin; shall I fill your receipts?"

"No," replied the other, "I simply came to state, that, owing to the derangement of our affairs, I am not just now in a condition to pay my rent."

"That is unpleasant, Mr. M'Loughlin."

"Of course it is," he replied; "that was my only business, Mr. M'Clutchy, and now I bid you good-day."

"Not so fast, if you please, Mr. M'Loughlin; do not be in such a hurry. You remember a meeting you and I had once in Castle Cumber fair?"

"I do."

"You remember the extraordinary civility with which you treated me?"

"I do, Val, and I only expressed what I thought then and think now; but indeed you have improved the wrong way wonderfully since."

"Your language was indiscreet then, and it is so now."

"It was true for all that, Mr. M'Clutchy."

"Now, might not I, if I wished, take ample revenge for the insulting terms you applied to me?"

"You might, and I suppose you will—I expect nothing else, for I know you well."

"You do not know me, Mr. M'Loughlin, so far from acting up to what you imagine, I shall not avail myself of your position; I have no such intention, I assure you, so that whatever apprehensions you may entertain from others, you need have none from me. And, now, Mr. M'Loughlin, do you not perceive that you judged me unjustly and uncharitably?"

"That's to be seen yet, Mr. M'Clutchy: time will tell."

"Well, then, make your mind easy; I shall take no proceedings in consequence of your situation—so far from that, I shall wait patiently till it is your convenience to pay the rent—so now, I wish you good day, Mr. M'Loughlin."

"That is a beautiful exhibition of Christian spirit," exclaimed Solomon, "good works are truly the fruit of faith."

"Before you go," said Phil, with a sneer, "will you allow me to ask how poor Mary is."

M'Loughlin paused, and calmly looked first at Phil, and then at his father.

"Phil," said the latter, "I shall order you out of the room, sir, if I hear another word on that unfortunate subject. I am very sorry, I assure you, Mr. M'Loughlin, for that untoward transaction—to be sure, I wish your daughter had been a little more prudent, but young ladies cannot, or at least, do not always regulate their passions or attachments; and so, when they make a false step, they must suffer for it. As for myself, I can only express my sincere regret that the *faux pas* happened, and that it should have got wind in such a way as to deprive the poor girl of her character."

After contemplating the father and son for some time alternately, with a look in which was visible the most withering contempt and scorn, and which made them both quail before him, he replied:

"Your falsehood, scoundrels, is as vindictive as it is cowardly, and you both know it; but I am an honest man, and I feel to stoop to a defence of my virtuous child against either of you, would be a degradation to her as well as to myself. I therefore go, leaving you my contempt and scorn, I could almost say my pity."

He then walked out, neither father nor son having thought it prudent to brave the expression of his eye by replying to his words.

"Now," said Val, addressing Solomon, "let there be an execution issued without a moment's delay—the man is doomed, his hour has come; and so, may I never prosper, if I don't scatter him and his, houseless and homeless, to the four corners of heaven! I have meshed him at last, and now for vengeance."

"But," said Solomon, in a tone of slight remonstrance, "I trust, my dear M'Clutchy, that in taking vengeance upon this man and his family, you will do so in a proper spirit, and guard against the imputations of an uncharitable world. When you take vengeance, let your motives be always pure and upright and even charitable—of course you expect and hope that you ruin this man and his family for their own spiritual good. The affliction that you are about to bring on them, will soften and subdue their hard and obstinate hearts, and lead them, it is to be hoped, to a better and more Christian state of feeling. May He grant it!"

"Of course," replied Val, humoring him in his hypocrisy, "of course it is from these motives I act; certainly it is."

"In that case," said Solomon, "I am bound to acknowledge that I never have heard a man vow vengeance, or express a determination to ruin his fellow creature, upon more delightfully Christian principles. It is a great privilege, indeed, to be able to ruin a whole family in such a blessed spirit, I have no doubt you feel it so."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Raymond's Sense of Justice—Force of the Ideal—Poll Doolin's Remorse—Conversation on Irish Property—Disclosure concerning Mary M'Loughlin.

About dusk, on the evening of that day, Poll Doolin having put on her black bonnet, prepared to go out upon some matter of a private nature, as was clearly evident by her manner, and the cautious nature of all her movements. Raymond, who eyed her closely, at length said—

"Take care now—don't harm *them*."

"Them!" replied Poll, "who do you mean by *them?*"

"The M'Loughlins—go and look at Mary, and then ask yourself why you join the divil:—there now, that's one. Who saved me? do you know that, or do you care? Very well, go now and join the divil, if you like; but I know what *I'll* do some fine night." Here he leaped in a state of perfect exultation from the ground.

"Why, what will you do?" said Poll.

"You'll not tell to-morrow," replied Raymond, "neither will any one else; but I don't forget poor white-head, nor Mary M'Loughlin."

"Well, keep the house like a good boy," she said, "till I come back; and, if anybody should come in, or ask where I am, say

that I went up to Jerry Hannigan's for soap and candles."

"Ay, but that's not true, because I know you're goin' to join the divil; but, no matter—go there—you'll have his blessin' any how, and it's long since he gave it to you—wid his left hand. I wish I wasn't your son—but no matther, no matther."

She then peeped out to see that the coast was clear, and finding that all was safe, she turned her steps hurriedly and stealthily, in a direction leading from, instead of to Castle Cumber. When she was gone, Raymond immediately closed and bolted the door, and began as before, to spring up in the air in a most singular and unaccountable manner. The glee, however, which became apparent on his countenance, had an expression of ferocity that was frightful; his eyes gleamed with fire, his nostrils expanded, and a glare of terrible triumph lit up every feature with something of a lurid light.

"Ha, ha!" he exclaimed, addressing, as some imaginary individual, an old pillow which he caught up; "I have you at last—now, now, now; ha, you have a throat, have you? I feel it now, now, now! Ay, that will do; hoo, hoo—out with it, out with it; I see the tip of it only, but you must give better measure; ay, that's like it. Hee, hee, hee! Oh, there—that same tongue never did you good, nor anybody else good—and what blessed eyes you have! they are comin' out, too, by degrees, as the lawyers goes to Heaven! Now! now! now! ay, where's your strugglin' gone to? It's little you'll make of it in Raymond's iron fingers—Halloo, this is for white-head, and white-head's—poor little white-head's—father, and for poor little white-head's mother, and this—ay, the froth's comin' now, now, now—and this last's for poor Mary M'Loughlin! Eh, ho, ho! There now—settled at last, with your sweet grin upon you, and your tongue out, as if you were makin' fun of me—for a beauty you were, and a beauty you are, and there I lave you!"

While uttering these words, he went through with violent gesticulations, the whole course and form of physical action that he deemed necessary to the act of strangling worthy Phil, whose graceful eidolon was receiving at his hands this unpleasant specimen of the pressure from without. He had one knee on the ground, his huge arms moving with muscular energy, as he crushed and compressed the pillow, until the very veins of his forehead stood out nearly black with the force at once of hatred and exertion. Having thus wrought his vengeance out to his own satisfaction, he once more, in imagination, transformed the pillow into his little white-head, as he loved to call him; and assumed a very different aspect from that which marked the strangulation scene just described.

"Come here," said he—taking it up tenderly in his arms—"come here—don't be afeard *now*; there's nobody that can do you any harm. Ah! my poor white-head—don't you want your mother to keep up your poor sick head, and to lay your poor pale face against her breast? And your father—you would like to get upon his knee and climb up to kiss him—wouldn't you, white-head? Yes, he says he would—white-head says he would—and tell me, sure I have the cock for you still; and if you want a drink I have something better than bog wather for you—the sickening bog wather! Oh! the poor pale face—and the poor sickly eye—up in the cowld mountains, and no one to think about you, or to give you comfort! Whisht now—be good—och, why do I say that, poor white-head—for sure you were always good! Well wait—bog wather—ah, no—but wait here—or come wid me—I won't lay you down, for I love you, my poor white-head; but come, and you must have it. My mother's gone out—and she's not good; but you must have it."

He rose, still holding the pillow like a child in his arms, and going over to a cupboard, took from it a jug of milk, and so completely was he borne away by the force of his imagination that he actually poured a portion of the milk upon the pillow.

The act seemed for the moment to dispel the illusion—but only for a moment; the benevolent heart of the poor creature seemed to take delight in these humane reminiscences; and, almost immediately, he was proceeding with his simple, but touching little drama.

"Well," said he, "that's better than cowld bog wather; how would the rich like to see their sick childre put on cowld wather and cowld pratees? But who cares for the rich, for the rich doesn't care about huz; but no matther, white-head—if you'll only just open your eyes and spake to me, I'll give you the cock." He gave a peculiar call, as he spoke, which was perfectly well known to the bird in question, which immediately flew from the roost, and went up to him; Raymond then gently laid the pillow down, and taking the cock up, put his head under one of his wings, and placed him on the pillow where he lay quietly and as if asleep. For many minutes he kept his eyes fixed upon the objects before him, until the image in his mind growing still stronger, and more distinct, became at last so painful that he burst into tears.

"No," said he, "he will never open his eyes again; he will never look upon any one more: and what will she do when she hasn't his white head before her?"

Whilst poor Raymond thus indulged himself in the caprices of a benevolent imagination, his mother was hastening to the house of Mr. Hickman, the former agent of the Castle Cumber property, with the intention of rendering an act of justice to an individual and a family whom she had assisted deeply and cruelly to injure. Whilst she is on the way, however, we will take the liberty of introducing our readers to Mr. Hickman's dining-room, where a small party are assembled; consisting of the host himself, Mr. Easel, the artist, Mr. Harman, and the Rev. Mr. Clement; and as their conversation bears upon the topic of which we write, we trust it may not be considered intruding upon private society to detail a part of it.

"Property in this country," said Hickman, "is surrounded by many difficulties—difficulties which unfortunately fall chiefly upon those who cultivate it. In the first place, there is the neglect of the landlord; in the next, the positive oppression of either himself or his agent; in the third, influence of strong party feeling—leaning too heavily on one class, and sparing or indulging the other; and perhaps, what is worse than all, and may be considered the *fons et origo malorum*, the absence of any principle possessing shape or form, or that can be recognized as a salutary duty on the part of the landlord. This is the great want and the great evil. There should be a distinct principle to guide, to stimulate, and when necessary to restrain him; such a principle as would prevent him from managing his property according to the influence of his passions, his prejudices, or his necessities."

"That is very true," said Mr. Clement, "and there is another duty which a landlord owes to those who reside upon his property, but one which unfortunately is not recognized as such; I mean a moral duty. In my opinion a landlord should be an example of moral propriety and moderation to his tenantry, so as that the influence of his conduct might make a salutary impression upon their lives and principles. At present the landed Proprietary of Ireland find in the country no tribunal by which they are to be judged; a fact which gives them the full possession of unlimited authority; and we all know that the absence of responsibility is a great incentive to crime. No man in a free country should be invested with arbitrary power; and yet, it is undeniable that an Irish landlord can exercise it whenever he pleases."

"Then what would you do," said Easel; "where is your remedy?"

"Let there be protective laws enacted, which will secure the tenant from the oppression and injustice of the landlord. Let him not lie, as he does, at the mercy of his caprices, passions, or prejudices."

"In other words," said Harman, "set the wolves to form protective enactments for the sheep. I fear, my good sir, that such a scheme is much too Utopian for any practically beneficial purpose. In the meantime, if it can be done, let it. No legislation, however, will be able, in my mind, to bind so powerful a class as the landlords of Ireland are, unless a strong and sturdy public opinion is created in the country."

"But how is this to be done?" asked Easel.

"It is to be done by educating the people; by teaching them their proper value in society; by instructing them in their moral and civil duties. Let them not labor under that humiliating and slavish error, that the landlord is everything, and themselves nothing; but let the absurdity be removed, and each party placed upon the basis of just and equal principle."

"It is very right," said Hickman, "to educate the people, but who is to educate the landlords?"

"A heavy task, I fear," said Easel, "from what I have observed since I came to the country."

"The public opinion I speak of will force them into a knowledge of their duties. At present they disregard public opinion, because it is too feeble to influence them; and consequently they feel neither fear nor shame. So long as the landlords and the people come together as opposing or antithetical principles, it is not to be supposed that the country can prosper."

"But how will you guide or restrain the landlord in estimating the value of his property?" inquired Mr. Clement. "Here are two brothers, for instance, each possessed of landed property; one is humane and moderate, guided both by good sense and good feeling; this man will not overburthen his tenant by exacting an oppressive rent. The other, however, is precisely the reverse of him, being naturally either rapacious or profligate, or perhaps both; he considers it his duty to take as much out of the soil as he can, without ever thinking of the hardships which he inflicts upon the tenant. Now, how would you remedy this, and prevent the tenant from becoming the victim either of his rapacity or profligacy?"

"Simply by taking from him all authority in estimating the value of his own property."

"But how?" said Clement, "is not that an invasion of private right?"

"No; it is nothing more than a principle which transfers an unsafe privilege to other hands, in order to prevent its abuse."

"But how would you value the land?"

"I am not at this moment about to legislate for it; but I think, however, that it would be by no means difficult to find machinery sufficiently simple and effective for the purpose. I am clearly of opinion that there should be a maximum value on all land, beyond which, unless for special purposes—such, for instance, as building—no landlord ought to be permitted to go. This would prevent an incredible amount of rack-renting and oppression on the one hand; and of poverty, revenge, and bloodshed on the other. Where is the landlord now who looks to the moral character or industrial habits of a tenant? Scarcely one. On the contrary, whoever bids highest, or bribes highest, is sure to be successful, without any reference to the very qualities which, in a tenant, ought to be considered as of most importance."

"I have now," said Easel, "made myself acquainted with the condition and management of the Castle Cumber property; and, truth to tell, I am not surprised at the frightful state of society upon it. M'Clutchy is the type of too numerous a class, and his son is a most consummate scoundrel. Why my—why Lord Cumber should have appointed him to his agency I cannot imagine."

"But I can," said Harman; "that which has appointed many a scoundrel like him—necessity on the part of the landlord, and a desire to extend his political influence in the county."

"He could not have gone a more successful way about it, however," observed Easel.

"If there be one curse," observed Harman, "worse than another on any such property, it is to have for your agent an outrageous partisan—a man who is friendly to one party and inimical to another—a fellow who scruples not to avail himself of his position, for the gratification of party rancor, and who makes the performance of his duties subservient to his prejudices, both religious and political. Think, for instance, of a rancorous No-Popery-man being made agent to an estate where the majority of the tenantry are Catholics."

"As is the case on the Castle Cumber estate," said Easel.

"And as is the case on too many estates throughout the country," added Harman; "but the truth is, that unless something is done soon to redress the local grievances of the people, there will, I fear, be bad work among us ere long. The tenantry are already in a state of tumult; they assemble on Sundays in vindictive-looking and suspicious groups; they whisper together, as if fraught with some secret purposes; and I am also told that they frequently hold nightly meetings to deliberate on what may be done. Between the M'Clutchys and M'Slimes, I must say they have ample cause for discontent."

"Everything considered," said Easel, "it is better that we should anticipate them. When I say we, you of course know who I mean; but indeed we shall expect every aid, and it will be welcome, no matter from what quarter it comes."

"M'Clutchy and the estate in question are topics on which I wish not to speak," said Hickman; "I do not blame Lord Cumber for dismissing me, Mr. Easel, the fact being that I dismissed myself; but I most sincerely hope and trust, for the sake of the people, that some change for the better may take place. Good God, sir, how popular your—how popular Lord Cumber might become, and what a blessing to his tenantry and his country he might be in a short time."

"I feel that, Mr. Hickman," said Easel, "I feel it now, because I *know* it. In this instance, too, I trust that knowledge will be power. Lord Cumber, sir, like other Irish Lords, has nothing to detain him in his native country but his own virtue. His absence, however, and the absence of his class in general, is, I fear"—and he smiled as he spoke—"a proof that his virtue, as an Irish nobleman, and theirs, is not sufficiently strong to resist the temptations of an English court, and all its frivolous, expensive, and fashionable habits. He has now no duty as an Irish peer to render his residence in Ireland, at least for a considerable portion of the year, a matter of necessity to his class and his country. However, let us not despair—I have reason to think that his brother has nearly succeeded in bringing him to a sense of his duty; and it is not impossible that the aspect of affairs may be soon changed upon his estate."

"The sooner, the better, for the sake of the people," said Harman. "By the by, Mr. Clement, are you to be one of the Reverend gladiators in this controversial tournay, which is about to take place in Castle Cumber?"

"No," said Mr. Clement; "I look upon such exhibitions as manifestations of fanaticism, or bigotry, and generally of both. They are, in fact, productive of no earthly good, but of much lamentable evil; for instead of inculcating brotherly love, kindness, and charity—they inflame the worst passions of adverse creeds—engender hatred, ill-will, and

fill the public mind with those narrow principles which disturb social harmony, and poison our moral feelings in the very fountain of the heart. I believe there is no instance on record of a sincere convert being made by such discussions."

"But is there not an extensive system of conversion proceeding, called the New Reformation?" asked Easel. "It appears to me by the papers, that the Roman Catholic population are embracing Protestantism by hundreds."

"How little are the true causes of great events known," said Hickman, laughing; "who, for instance, would suppose that the great spiritual principle by which this important movement has been sustained is the failure of the potato crop in the country, where this gracious work is proceeding. One would think, if everything said were true, that there are epidemics in religion as well as in disease; but the truth is, that the knavery or distress of two or three Catholics who were relieved, when in a state of famine, by a benevolent and kind-hearted nobleman, who certainly would encourage neither dishonesty nor imposture, first set this Reformation agoing. The persons I speak of, fearing that his Lordship's benevolence might cease to continue, embraced Protestantism *pro forma* and *pro tempore*. This went abroad, and almost immediately all who were in circumstances of similar destitution adopted the same course, and never did man pay more dearly for evangelical truth than did his Lordship. In the forthcoming battle the parsons are to prove to the world that all who belong to Popery must be damned, whilst the priests, on the other hand, broil the parsons until they blaze in their own fat. But, my God, when will charity and common sense prevail over bigotry and brimstone!"

At this moment a servant entered to say that Poll Doolin—for she was well known—wished to see Mr. Harman on very particular business.

"I can scarcely bear to look on the wretch," said Harman, "but as I strongly suspect, that she may in some shape be useful to us, I desired her to come here. She called three times upon me, but I could not bring myself to see or speak to her; she shall be the bearer of no messages to me," he said bitterly, "let her carry them elsewhere; d—n her."

He betrayed deep and powerful emotion as he spoke, but, as his allusions were understood, there was—from a respect for his feelings, on the part of his audience—no reply made to his observations.

"Since she called first," said Harman, pursuing the train of melancholy thought, "some vague notion, like the shadow of a dream, crossed me; but, alas! it is transgressing the bounds of imagination itself, even to suppose that it could be true. However, if it were, it is in your presence, sir," he said, addressing himself to Easel, "that I should wish to have it detailed; and, perhaps, after all, this slight, but latent reflection of hope, influenced me in desiring her to come here. Gentlemen, excuse me," said he, covering his face with his hands, "I am very wretched and unhappy — I cannot account for what has occurred; it looks like an impossibility, but it is true. Oh, if he were a man!—but, no, no, you all know how contemptible—what a dastardly scoundrel he is!"

"Harman, my dear fellow," said Hickman, "we understand you, we respect your feelings, and we sympathize with you—but, in the meantime, do see and hear this woman."

He had scarcely uttered the words when the servant entered, stating that she was at the door.

"Let her come in," said Harman; "let the vile wretch come in."

"And, do you, John, withdraw," said Hickman.

Poll Doolin entered.

Her appearance threw Harman into a violent state of agitation; he trembled, got pale, and seemed absolutely sickened by the presence of the wicked wretch who had been the vile instrument of Phil M'Clutchy's success, of Mary M'Loughlin's dishonor, and of his own unhappiness. It was the paleness, however, of indignation, of distress, of misery, of despair. His blood, despite the paleness of his face, absolutely boiled in his veins, and that the more hotly, because he had no object on which he could wreak his vengeance. Poll, who was always cool, and not without considerable powers of observation, at once noticed the tumult of his feelings, and, as if replying to them, said—

"I don't blame you, Mr. Harman, thinkin' as you do; the sight of me is not pleasant to you—and, indeed, you don't hate me more than you ought."

"What is your business with me?" said Harman.

Poll looked around her for a moment, and replied—

"I'm glad of it, the more the better; Francis Harman," she proceeded, "sit down, and listen to me; yes, listen to *me*—for I have it in my power to make you a happy man."

"Great God! could my dream be true?" said Harman, placing himself in the chair.

"Listen to me," she continued.

"I listen; be brief — for I am in no humor for either falsehood or imposture."

"I never bore *you* ill-will," she said, "and yet I have—and may God forgive me for it—scalded the very heart within you."

Harman again covered his face with his hands and groaned.

"Will it relieve your heart to know that Mary M'Loughlin's an innocent and a slandered girl?"

"Prove that," said Harman, starting to his feet, "oh, prove that, Poll, and never whilst I have life shall you want a—but, alas!" he exclaimed, "I am a beggar, and can promise you nothing."

"And I'll tell you who beggared you before all is over—but, as I said, listen. It's now fifteen years since Brian M'Loughlin transported my son Dick, for stealin' a horse from him; he was my only son, barrin' poor Raymond, who was then a mere slip. He was a fine young man, but he was wild and wicked, and it was in Squire Deaker's house, and about Squire Deaker's stables, that he picked up his dishonesty and love of horses—he was groom to that ould profligate, who took him into sarvice for a raison he had."

"Be as brief as you can," said Harman, "brief—brief."

"On the contrary, Mr. Harman," said Clement, "let her, if you will be advised by me, take her own time, and her own way."

"Thank you, sir," said Poll, "that's just what I wish. Well, he, M'Loughlin, transported my boy, that my heart was in, and from that minute I swore never to die till I'd revenge that act upon him. Very well—I kept my word. Phil M'Clutchy sent for me, and in his father's presence, we made up a plot to disgrace Miss M'Loughlin. I brought her out two or three times to meet me privately, and it was all on your account, by the way, for I tould her you were in danger; and I so contrived it, that on one or two occasions you should see myself and her together. I made her promise solemnly not to tell that she saw me, or mention what passed between us, or if she did, that your life was not safe; her love for you, kept her silent even to yourself. But it was when you were sent to gaol, that we found we had the best opportunity of ruining her, which was all I wanted: but Phil, the boy, wished to give you a stab as well as her. As for myself it was in for a penny, in for a pound with me, and I didn't care a traheen what you suffered, provided I had my revenge on any one belongin' to Brian M'Loughlin, that transported my son."

"Is Mary M'Loughlin innocent?" asked Harman, starting from his seat, and placing his face within a few inches of Poll Doolin's.

Poll calmly put her hand upon his shoulder, and said:—

"Sit down, young man; don't disturb or stop me in what I'm sayin', and you'll come the sooner at the truth."

"You are right," he replied, "but who can blame me?—my happiness depends on it."

"Listen," said she, "we made up a plan that she was to meet Phil behind her father's garden—and why? Why, because I told her that Val had made up his mind to hang you; but I said that Phil, for her sake, could prevent that, and save you, if she would only see him that he might clear himself of some reports that had gone abroad on him. *For your sake* she consented to that; but not until I had brought her nearly to despair, and till she believed that there was no other hope for you. It was Val M'Clutchy, though, that put me up to bring several of the neighbors, and among the rest your own cousin, to witness the trick of Phil's gettin' in at the windy; as it was his to bring the bloodhounds, at the very minute, to catch the scoundrel in the poor girl's bedroom. That was enough; all the wather in the say couldn't wash her white, when this was given to the tongue of scandal to work upon."

"But," said Mr. Clement, "you unfortunate woman, let me ask, why you suffered Mr. Harman to live under a conviction of Miss M'Loughlin's guilt?"

"I tould you I had sworn to be revenged on either him, M'Loughlin, or his; and so I was—may God forgive me!—but one day that my poor foolish son undertook to convey Hugh Roe O'Regan's wife across the ford of Drum Dhu river while in a flood, he lost his footing, and never would breathe the breath of life again, only that God sent John M'Loughlin to the spot, and at the risk of his own life, he saved poor Raymond's. From that day out my heart changed. If one son was sent from me in life, the other was saved from death; and I swore to tell *you* the truth. But that's not the only injury I have done you. They put me up, and so did Solomon M'Slime, to drop hints wherever I went, that you and Mr. M'Loughlin were on the point of failin'; and, I believe, from some words I heard Phil say to Solomon one morning, that they put something into the paper that injured you."

"What was it you heard?" said Hickman.

"Phil said—'all right, Solomon, it's *in*—and—d—n my honor and reputation, but it will set a screw loose in the same firm;' he was reading the paper as he spoke."

"All this is of great value," said Easel, "and must be made use of."

"As for me," said Harman in an impassioned voice, "I care not a jot for our bankruptcy; the great and oppressive evil of my heart is removed; I ought, I admit, to have known that admirable girl better than

to suffer any suspicion of her to have entered into my heart; but, then, I must have discredited my own eyes—and so I ought. God bless you, Poll! I forgive you all that you and those malignant villains have made me suffer, in consequence of what you have just now disclosed to us."

"I could not have believed this," observed Easel; "I scarcely thought that such profound infamy was in human nature. Good God—and these two men hold the important offices of Head and Under Agent on the Castle Cumber estate!"

"Have you nothing particular, Poll, about that pious little man, M'Slime?" asked Hickman. Poll, however, who in no instance was ever known to abuse professional confidence, shook her head in the negative.

"No;" said she, "I know nothing that I can tell about him; honor bright's my motive—no—no. However, thank God, I've aised my mind by tellin' the truth, and when you see Mr. M'Loughlin, Mr. Harman, I'll thank you to let him know that I have done his daughter justice, and that from the minute his son saved mine, I had no ill-will to him or his family." She then departed.

CHAPTER XXV.

A Ribbon Lodge—Val and his Son brought to Trial—Their Crimes against the People—Their Doom and Sentence—A Rebel Priest Preaching Treason—A Respite.

It is undoubtedly a fact, as was observed in the dialogue just given, that the state of affairs on this property was absolutely fearful. The framework of society was nearly broken up, for such was the heartless rapacity and cruelty—such the multiplied and ingenious devices by which he harassed and robbed the tenantry, or wreaked his personal vengeance on all who were obnoxious to him or his son, that it was actually impossible matters could proceed much longer in a peaceable state. If the reader will accompany us to a large waste house, from which a man had been some time before ejected, merely because Val had a pique against him, he may gather from the lips of the people themselves, there assembled, on the very night in question, sufficiently clear symptoms of the state of feeling in the neighborhood.

The hour at which they assembled, or rather began to assemble, was eleven o'clock, from which period until twelve they came in small groups of two or three at a time; so as to avoid observation on the way. Some of them had their faces blackened, and others who appeared utterly indifferent to consequences, did not think it worth their while to assume such a disguise. The waste house in which they were assembled, stood on a hillside, about half way between Castle Cumber and Drum Dhu; so that its isolated situation was an additional proof of their security from a surprise by the blood-hounds. The party were nearly all armed, each with such weapons as he could get, and most of them with fire or side arms, such as they were. They had several lights, but so cautious were they, that quilts and window-cloths were brought to hang over the windows, to prevent them from being seen; for it was well known that the house was not inhabited, and the appearance of lights in it would most certainly send the wreckers on their back; as it was, however, they obviated all danger of this in the way I mention. When these men were met together, it might be supposed that they presented countenances marked by savage and ferocious passions, and that atrocity and cruelty were the predominating traits in each face. This, however, was not so. In general they were just as any other number of men brought together for any purpose might be. Some, to be sure, among them betrayed strong indications of animal impulse; but taken together, they looked just as I say. When they were all nearly assembled, one might naturally imagine that the usual animated dialogue and discussions, which the cause that brought them together furnished, would have taken place. This, however, was not the case. On the contrary, there was something singularly wild, solemn, and dreadful, in their comparative quietness; for silence we could not absolutely term it.

There were many reasons for this. In the first place, there existed an apprehension of the yeomanry and cavalry, who had on more than one occasion surprised meetings of this description before. 'Tis true they had sentinels placed—but the sentinels themselves had been made prisoners of by parties of yeomen and blood-hounds, who had come in colored clothes, in twos and threes, like the Ribbonmen themselves. There were other motives, however, for the stillness which prevailed—motives which, when we consider them, invest the whole proceedings with something that is calculated to fill the mind with apprehension and fear. Here were men unquestionably assembled for illegal purposes—for the perpetration of crime—for the shedding of human blood. But in what light did they view this terrible determination? Simply as a redress of grievances; as the only means left them of doing that for

themselves which the laws refused to do for them. They keenly and bitterly felt the scourge of the oppressor, who, under the sanction, and in the name of those laws which ought to have protected them, left scarcely anything undone to drive them to desperation; and now finding that the law existed only for their punishment, they resolved to legislate for themselves, and retaliate on their oppressor. There is an awful lesson in all this; for it is certainly a frightful thing to see law and justice so partially and iniquitously administered as to disorganize society, and to make men look upon murder as an act of justice, and the shedding of blood as a moral triumph, if not a moral virtue. When, therefore, the very little conversation which took place among them, and that little in so low a tone, is placed in connection with the dark and deadly object of their meeting, it is no wonder that one cannot help feeling strangely and fearfully on contemplating it.

About twelve o'clock they were all assembled but one individual, whom they appeared to expect, and for whom they looked out eagerly. Indeed they all came to a unanimous resolution of doing nothing that pertained to the business of the night until he should come. For this purpose they had not to wait long. A little past twelve a tall and powerful young man entered, leading by the hand poor insane Mary O'Regan—his pitiable and unconscious mother. He had heard of the death of his brother, during the cruel scene at Drum Dhu, and of the other inhuman outrage which had driven her mad. He had come from a remote part of England with the single, fixed, and irrevocable purpose of wreaking vengeance on the head of him who had brought madness, desolation, and death upon his family.

On his entering, there was a slight low murmur of approbation, but the appearance of his mother caused it to die away. This, however, was almost immediately succeeded by another of a very different character—one in which there was a blending of many feelings—compassion, rage, revenge. The first thing the young man did was to take a candle in his hand, and hold it first close to his mother, so as that she might be distinctly seen, and afterward, near to his own face, in order that she might have a clear and equally distinct view of him. "Mother," said he, then, in a full voice, "do you know your son?" Her eye was upon him as he spoke, but it was vacant; there appeared no trace of recognition or meaning in it.

"You all see that miserable sight," said he—"there my mother stands, and doesn't know who it is that is spaking to her. There she stands, blasted and destroyed by the oppressor. You all see this heart-breakin' sight with your own eyes, and you all know who did it."

'Tis singular how closely virtue and crime are allied! The very sympathy excited by this touching and melancholy spectacle—the very tenderness of the compassion that was felt for the mother and son, hardened the heart in a different sense, and stimulated them to vengeance.

"Now," said the young man, whose name was Owen, "let them that have been oppressed and harassed by this Vulture, state their grievances, one at a time."

An old man near sixty rose up, and after two or three attempts to speak, was overpowered by his feelings, and burst into tears.

"Poor Jemmy Devlin!" they exclaimed, "may God pity you!"

"Spake for Jemmy, some of you, as the poor man isn't able to spake for himself."

"Why, the case was this," said a neighbor of the poor man's. "Jemmy's son, Peter, was abused by Phil, the boy, because he didn't pay him *duty-work*, and neglect his own harvest. He told Peter that he was a Popish rebel and would be hanged. Peter told him to his teeth that he was a liar, and that he couldn't be good, havin' the father's bastard dhrop in him. That was very well, but one night in about a month afterwards, the house was surrounded by the bloodhounds, poor Peter's clo'es searched, and some Ribbon papers found in them; they also got, or pretended to get, other papers in the thatch of the house. The boy was dragged out of his bed, sent to goal, tried, found guilty on the evidence of the bloodhounds, and sentenced to be flogged three times; but never was flogged a third time, for he died on the fourth day after the second flogging; and so, bein' an only son—indeed all the child the poor couple had—the old man is now childless and distracted, God help him!"

"Very well," exclaimed Owen bitterly—"very well—who next?"

A man named M'Mahon rose up,—"The curse of the Almighty God may for ever rest upon him!" he exclaimed. "He transported my two brave sons, because they were Whiteboys; and if they were, who made them Whiteboys but himself and his cruelty? I will never see my darling sons' faces again, but if I die without settlin' accounts wid him, may I never know happiness here or hereafter!"

The usual murmur of commiseration followed this.

"Well," said Owen, "whose turn comes next?"

About a dozen of those who had been turned out of Drum Dhu now stood up.

"We were turned out," said one of them, who acted as spokesman, "on one of the bittherest days that God ever sent on the earth; out of shame, I believe, because your brother and ould Mary Casey died, he let us back for a few days, but after that we had to flit. Some of the houses he had pulled down, and then he had to build them again for his voters. Oh, if it was only known what we suffered!"

"And why did he turn you out?"

"Why, because we didn't promise to vote as he wished."

"He took my crop," said another, "at his own valuation, drew it home, and stacked it until the markets rose. I know what he got beyond the rent," proceeded the man, "but divil a rap ever the villain gave me back of the surplus, but put it in his pocket—and now I and my family are starving."

"Ay, and," said another, "he took five firkins of as good butter from me as ever was made by hand, and at his own price, too. What could I do?—he said it was as a friend he did it; but if I objected to it, he said he must only seize. May the divil seize him, at any rate, as he will, the villain, I trust in God! He got to my own knowledge, thirteen pence a pound for it, and all he allowed me for it was eight pence halfpenny. May the devil run an auger through him, or baste his sowl wid it, this night; for of all the villains that ever cursed an estate, he's the greatest—barrin' the scoundrel that employs him."

A poor but decent-looking man rose up.

"I could bear," said he, "his cheating, or his defrauding me out of my right—I could bear that, although it's bad enough too; but when I think of the shame and disgrace his son brought upon my innocent girl, undher his father's roof, where she was at sarvice—may God curse him this night! My child—my child—when I think of what she was, and what she is, sure the thought of it is enough to drive me distracted, and to break my heart. Are we to live undher sich men? Ought we to allow sich villains to tramp us undher their feet? When I spoke to his blasted son about ruinin' my child—'My good fellow,' says he, 'if you don't keep a civil tongue in your head, I will trot you off the estate—I will send you to graze somewhere else. It's d—d proud you ought to feel for your daughter having a child by the like o' me;'—for that's the way—they first injure us, and kick us about as they plaise, and then laugh at and insult us."

Another man got up.

"You all know," said he, "that I hould fourteen acres in the townland of Aughaminchal; and when Jerry Grogan went to America last spring, I offered for his farm of twelve acres, that lay into my own, marchin it. I offered him the rent he axed, which indeed was too much at any rate—but it lay so snug to me, that I could take more out of it than another. 'You shall have the farm, Frank,' said he; 'but if you do, there must be ten pounds of an *Imput*.'* Well and good, I paid him the ten pounds, and Paddy Gormly, of Aughadarragh, gave him another *Imput* for the same farm; and yet, hell bellis the villain, he gave it to neither of us, but to one of his own *Blood-hounds*, who gave him twenty for it. But that wasn't all—when I axed him for my money, he laughs in my face, and says, 'Is it jokin' you are? Keep yourself quiet,' says he, 'or may be I'll make it a black joke to you.' Hell resave him!"

"He engaged me, and my horse and car," said another, "and Toal Hart with his, in the same way; to draw stones from Kilrudden; and he said that whatever we earned he'd allow us in the rint. Of coorse we were glad to bounce at it; and, indeed, he made us both believe that it was a favor he did us. So far so good; but when the rint day came, hell purshue the testher he'd allow either of us; but threatened and abused us, callin' us names till the dogs wouldn't lick our blood. The Lord conshume him for a netarnal villain!"

"That's all very well, but wait till you hear how he sarved me out," said a poor, simple-looking creature. "It was at the gale day before the last, that I went to him wid my six guineas of rint. 'Paddy Hanlon,' says he, 'I'm glad to see you; an', Paddy, I've something in my eye for you; but don't be spakin' of it. Is that the rent?—hand it to me—an', Paddy, as this is Hurry Day with me—do like a good decent man, call down on Saturday about twelve o'clock, and I'll give you your receipt, and mention the other thing.' By coorse I went highly delighted; but the receipt he gave me was a notice to pay the same gale over agin, tellin' me besides, that of all the complatest rascals ever came acrass him I was the greatest; that he'd banish me off the estate and what not! Accordingly, I had to pay the same rint twiste. Now will any one tell me how that man can prosper by robbin' and oppressin' the poor in this way? Hell scorch him!"

The next that rose was a tall, thin-looking man, with much care and sorrow in his face. "Many a happy day," he said, "did I and

* *Imput*—a douceur—or, in other words, a bribe to the agent, on entering upon a farm.

mine spend under this roof; and now we may say that we hardly have a roof to cover us. Myself, and my wife, hould a cabin on the estate of Major Richardson. My sons and daughters, instead of living comfortably at home with us, are now scattered abroad, earnin' their hard bread on other people's floors. And why? Because the Vulture's profligate son couldn't succeed in ruinin' one of my daughters; and because her brother Tom tould him that if ever he catched him comin' about the place again, or annoyin' his sisther, he'd split him with a spade. Afther that, they were both very friendly—father and son—and when I brought my half-year's rent—'never mind now,' said they, 'bring it home, Andy; maybe you may want it for something else that 'ud be useful to you. Buy a couple o' cows—or keep it till next rent day; we won't hurry *you*—you're a dacent man, and we respect you.' Well, I did put the money to other uses, when what should come down on me when the next half year's rent was due, but an Execution. He got a man of his own to swear that I was about to run away wid the rent, and go to America; and in a few days we were scattered widout a house to cover us. May the Lord reward him accordin' to his works!"

There were other unprincipled cases where Phil's profligacy was brought to bear upon the poverty and destitution of the uneducated and unprotected female; but it is not our intention to do more than to allude to them.

We now return to young O'Regan himself, who, at the conclusion, once more got a candle, and precisely in the same manner as he had done in the beginning, held it up and asked in a full firm voice, "mother, do you know your son?" And again received the same melancholy and unconscious gaze.

"Now," said he, "you've all heard an account, and a true account, of these two villains' conduct. What have they left undone? They have cheated you, robbed you, and oppressed you in every shape. They have scourged to death and transported your sons—and they have ruined your daughters, and brought them to sin and shame—sorrow and distraction. What have they left undone, I ax again? Haven't they treated yez like the dirt under their feet? hunted yez like bloodhounds, as they are—and as if ye were mad dogs? What is there that they haven't made yez suffer? Shame, sin, poverty, hardship, bloodshed, ruin, death, and madness; look there"—he added, vehemently pointing to his insane mother—"there's one proof that you see; and you've heard and know the rest. And now for their trial."

Those blood-stirring observations were followed by a deep silence, in fact, like that of death.

"Now," said he, pulling out a paper, "I have marked down here twelve names that I will read for you. They are to act as a jury; they are to thry them both for their lives—and then to let us hear their sentence."

He then read over the twelve names, every man answering to his name as he called them out.

"Now," he proceeded, "this is how you are to act; your silence will give consent to any question that is asked of you. Are you willin' that these twelve men should thry Valentine M'Clutchy and his son for their lives; and that the sentence is to be put in execution on them?" To this there was a profound and ominous silence.

"Very well," said he, "you agree to this. Now," said he to the jurors, "find your sentence."

The men met together, and whispered in the centre of the floor, for a few minutes—when he, who acted as foreman, turned towards O'Regan and said—"They're doomed."

"To what death?"

"To be both shot."

"Are you all satisfied with this sentence?"

Another silence as deep and ominous as before.

"Very well," said he, "you all agree. As for the sentence, it is a just one; none of you need throuble yourselves any farther about *that;* you may take my word for it, that it will be carried into execution. Are you willing it should?"

For the third time an unbroken silence.

"That's enough," said he; "and now let us go quietly home."

"It is *not* enough," said a voice at the door; "let none depart without my permission, I command you;" and the words were no sooner uttered than the venerable Father Roche entered the house.

"Wretched and misguided men," said he, "to what a scene of blood and crime have I just now been an ear witness? Are you men who live under my ministry?—who have so often heard and attended to my sincere and earnest admonitions? I cannot think ye are, and yet, I see no face here that is unknown to me. Oh, think for a moment, reflect, if you can, upon what you have been doing!—planning the brutal, ungodly murder of two of your fellow creatures! And what makes the crime still more revolting, these two fellow creatures father and son. What constituted you judges over them? If they have

oppressed you, and driven many of you to ruin and distress, and even to madness, yet, do you not know that there is a just God above to whom they must be accountable for the deeds done in the flesh? Are you to put yourselves in the place of the Almighty?—to snatch the sceptre of justice and judgment out of his hands, and take that awful office into your own, which belongs only to him? Are ye indeed mad, my friends? Do you not know that out of the multitude assembled here this moment there is not one of you whose life would not be justly forfeited to the law? not one. I paused at the half closed door before I entered, and was thus enabled to hear your awful, your guilty, your blasphemous proceedings. Justice belongs to God, and in mocking justice you mock the God of Justice."

"But you don't know, Father Roche," said O'Regan, "you couldn't imagine all the villany he and his son have been guilty of, and all they've made the people suffer."

"I do know it too well; and these are grievances that God in his own good time will remove; but it is not for us to stain our souls with guilt in order to redress them. Now, my children, do you believe that I feel an interest in your welfare, and in your happiness hereafter? Do you believe this?"

"We do, sir; who feels for us as you do?"

"Well, then, will you give me a proof of this?"

"Name it, sir, name it."

"I know you will," continued the old man; "I know you will. Then, in the name of the merciful God, I implore, I entreat—and, if that will not do, then, as his servant, and the humble minister of his word and will—I *command* you to disavow the murderous purpose you have come to this night. Heavenly Father," said he, looking up with all the fervor of sublime piety, "we entreat you to take from these mistaken men the wicked intention of imbruing their guilty hands in blood; teach them a clear sense of Christian duty; to love their very enemies; to forgive all injuries that may be inflicted on them; and to lead such lives as may never be disturbed by a sense of guilt or the tortures of remorse!" The tears flowed fast down his aged cheeks as he spoke, and his deep sobbings for some time prevented him from speaking. Those whom he addressed were touched, awakened, melted. He proceeded:—

"Take pity on their condition, O Lord, and in thine own good time, if it be thy will, let their unhappy lot in this life be improved! But, above all things, soften their hearts, inspire them with good and pious purposes, and guard them from the temptations of revenge! They are my flock—they are my children—and, as such, thou knowest how I love and feel for them!"

They were more deeply moved, more clearly awakened, and more penetratingly touched. Several sobs were heard towards the close of his prayer, and a new spirit was diffused among them.

"Now, my children," said he, "will you obey the old man that loves you?"

"We will," was the universal response, "we will obey you."

"Then," said he, "you promise in the presence of God, that you will not injure Valentine M'Clutchy and his son?"

"In the presence of God we promise," was the unanimous reply.

"Then, my children, may the blessing of Almighty God be with you, and guard and protect you wherever you go. And now proceed home, and sleep with consciences unburthened by guilt."

And thus were Valentine M'Clutchy and his son saved, on this occasion, by the very man whom they termed "*a rebellious Popish priest.*"

It was observed, however, by most of those present that Owen O'Regan availed himself of the good priest's remonstrance to disappear from the meeting—thus evading the solemn obligation to refrain from crime, into which all the rest entered.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Harman's Interview with Mary M'Loughlin—An Execution for Rent Forty Years ago—Gordon Harvey's Friendly Remonstrance with his Brother Orangemen.

The development, by Poll Doolin, of the diabolical plot against Mary M'Loughlin's character, so successfully carried into effect by Phil and Poll herself, took a deadly weight off Harman's heart. Mary, the following morning, little aware that full justice had been rendered her, was sitting in the parlor with her mother, who had been complaining for a day or two of indisposition, and would have admitted more fully the alarming symptoms she felt, were it not for the declining health of her daughter. If there be one misery in life more calculated than another to wither and consume the heart, to make society odious, man to look like a blot in the creation, and the very providence of God doubtful, it is to feel one's character publicly slandered and misrepresented by the cowardly and malignant, by the skulking scoundrel and the moral assassin—to feel yourself loaded with imputations that are false, calumnious, and cruel. Mary M'Loughlin felt all this bitterly

in her heart; so bitterly, indeed, that all relish for life had departed from her. She was now spiritless, hopeless, without an aim or object, or anything to sustain her, or to give interest to existence. Philosophy, which too often knows little about actual life, tells us that a consciousness of being innocent of the social slanders that are heaped upon an individual, is a principle that ought to support and console him. But the truth is, that this very consciousness of innocence is precisely the circumstance which sharpens and poisons the arrow that pierces him, and gives rancor to the wound.

On the morning in question, Mary sat by her mother, who lay reclining on a sofa, each kindly attempting to conceal from the other the illness which she felt. Mary was pale, wasted, and drooping; the mother, on the contrary, was flushed and feverish.

"I wish, my dear mother," said she, "that you would yield to me, and go to bed: you are certainly worse than you wish us to believe."

"It won't signify, Mary; it's nothing but cold I got, and it will pass away. I think nothing of myself, but it grieves my heart to see you look so ill; why don't you strive to keep up your spirits, and to be what you used to be? But God help you, my poor child," said she, as the tears started to her eyes, "sure it's hard for you to do so."

"Mother," she replied, "it is hard for me; I am every way surrounded with deep and hopeless affliction. I often wish that I could lay my head quietly in the grave; but then, I should wish to do so with my name unstained—and, on the other hand, what is there that can bind me to life? I am not afraid of death, but I fear to die now; I know not, mother, what to do, I am very much to be pitied. Oh," she added, whilst the tears fell in torrents from her cheeks, "after all, I feel that nothing but death can still the thoughts that disturb me, and release me from the anguish that weighs me down and consumes me day by day."

"My dear child," replied her mother, "we must only trust to God, who, in his own good time, will set everything right. As it is, there is no respectable person in the neighborhood who believes the falsehood, with the exception of some of the diabolical wretch's friends."

Mary here shuddered, and exhibited the strongest possible symptoms of aversion, even to momentary sickness.

"If," pursued the mother, "the unfortunate impression could be removed from poor, mistaken Harman, all would be soon right."

The mention of Harman deeply affected the poor girl; she made no reply, but for some minutes wept in great bitterness.

"Mother," said she, after a little time, "I fear you are concealing the state of your own health; I am sure, from your flushed face and oppressive manner of speaking, that you are worse than you think yourself, or will admit."

"Indeed, to tell the truth, Mary, I fear I am; I feel certainly very feverish—I am burning."

"Then, for heaven's sake, go to bed, my dear mother; and let the doctor at once be sent for."

"If I don't get easier soon, I will," replied her mother, "I do not much like going to bed, it looks so like a fit of sickness."

At this moment a tap at the door announced a visitor, and almost immediately Harman entered the parlor. It is scarcely necessary to say, that Mary was quite unprepared for his appearance, as indeed was her mother. The latter sat up on the sofa, but spoke not, for she scarcely knew in what terms to address him. Mary, though much moved previous to his entrance, now assumed the appearance of a coldness, which in her heart she did not feel. That her lover, who ought to have known her so well, should have permitted himself to be borne away by such an ungenerous suspicion of her fidelity, was a reflection which caused her many a bitter pang. On the other hand, when she looked back upon the snare into which she had been drawn, it was impossible not to admit that the force of appearances made a strong case against her. For this reason, therefore, she scarcely blamed Harman, whilst, at the same time, she certainly felt that there was something due to her previous character, and the maidenly delicacy of her whole life.

"You are surprised, Mary, to see me here," said Harman; "and you, Mrs. M'Loughlin, are no doubt equally so?"

"I think it is very natural we should be, James," replied Mrs. M'Loughlin. "I must confess that your visit is an unexpected one certainly, and my anxiety now is, to know the cause to which we may attribute it. Sit down."

He did not sit, however, but exclaimed—

"Good heavens, what is this? Why, Mary, I should scarcely have known you. This change is dreadful."

Neither of the females spoke; but the daughter bestowed on him a single look—long, fixed, and sorrowful—which did more to reprove and soften him, than any language could have done. It went to his heart—it filled him with grief, repentance, remorse. For many a day and night afterwards, her

image, and that look, were before him, exerting a power over his soul, which kindled his love to a height it would never otherwise have reached. He approached her.

"What reparation do I not owe you, my beloved Mary, for my base and ungenerous belief in that scoundrel's vile calumny? Such reparation, however, as I can make, I will. You are not aware that Poll Doolin has confessed and disclosed the whole infamous plot; and in a few days the calumny will be extinct. As for me, you know not what a heavy weight pressed my heart down to the uttermost depths of suffering. I have not been without other calamities—yet this, I take heaven to witness, was the only one I felt."

There was a tone of deep feeling and earnest sincerity in his words, which could not for a moment be mistaken. His face, too, was pale, and full of care, and his person much thinner than it had been.

Mary saw all this at a glance—as did her mother. "Poor James," said the latter, "you have had your own troubles, and severe ones, too, since we saw you last."

"They are gone," he replied; "I care not, and think little about them, now that Mary's character is vindicated. If I should never see her, never speak to her more, the consciousness that she is the same angelic being that I first found her to be, would sustain me under the severest and most depressing calamities of life. And God knows," he said, "I am likely to experience them in their worst shape; but, still, I have courage now to bear up against them."

On approaching Mary nearer, he perceived that her eyes were suffused with tears—and the sight deeply affected him. "My dear Mary," said he, "is there not one word for me? Oh, believe me, if ever man felt deep remorse I do."

She put her hand out to him, and almost at the same instant became insensible. In a moment he placed her, by her mother's desire, on the sofa, and rang the bell for some of the servants to attend. Indeed, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to look upon a more touching picture of sorrow and suffering than that pure-looking and beautiful girl presented as she lay there insensible; her pale but exquisite features impressed with a melancholy at once deep and tender, as was evinced by the large tear-drops that lay upon her cheeks.

"May God grant that her heart be not broken," exclaimed her mother, "and that she be not already beyond the reach of all that our affections would hope and wish! Poor girl," she added, "the only portion of the calamity that touched her to her heart was the reflection that you had ceased to love her!"

Mrs. M'Loughlin whilst she spoke kept her eyes fixed upon her daughter's pale but placid face; and whilst she did so, she perceived that a few large tears fell upon it, and literally mingled with those of the poor sufferer's which had been there before. She looked up and saw that Harman was deeply moved.

"Even if it should be so," he exclaimed, "I shall be only justly punished for having dared to doubt her."

A servant having now entered, a little cold water was got, which, on being sprinkled over her face and applied to her lips, aided in recovering her.

"Your appearance," said she, "and the intelligence you brought were so unexpected, and my weakness so great, that I felt myself overcome; however, I am better—I am better, now;" but whilst she uttered these words her voice grew tremulous, and they were scarcely out of her lips when she burst out into an excessive fit of weeping. For several minutes this continued, and she appeared to feel relieved; she then entered into conversation, and was able to talk with more ease and firmness than she had evinced for many a day before. It was just then that a knock came to the hall door, and in a couple of minutes about a dozen of Val's blood-hounds, selected to act as bailiffs and keepers—a task to which they were accustomed—entered the house with an Execution to seize for rent. This, at all times and under all circumstances, is a scene in which a peculiar license is given to brutality and ruffianism; but in the present case there were additional motives with which the reader is already acquainted for insulting this family. Not that the mere levying of an Execution was a matter of novelty to either Mary or her mother, for of late there had unfortunately been several in the house and on their property before. These, however, were conducted with a degree of civility that intimated respect for, if not sympathy with, the feelings of a family so inoffensive, so beneficial to the neighborhood by the employment they afforded, and, in short, every way so worthy of respect.

"What is all this about?" asked Harman.

"Why," said one of the fellows, "we're seizin' for rent: that's what it's about."

"Rent," observed the other, surprised, "why, it is only a few minutes since Mr. M'Loughlin told me that M'Clutchy assured him—"

"*Captain* M'Clutchy, sir, if you plaise."

"Very well—Captain M'Clutchy, or Colonel M'Clutchy, if you wish, assured him that—"

"I have nothing to do with what he assured him," replied the fellow; "my duty is to take an inventory of the furniture; beg pardon, ladies, but we must do our duty you know."

"Let them have their way," said Mrs. M'Loughlin, "let them have their way; I know what they are capable of. Mary, my dear, be firm—as I said before—our only trust is in God, my child."

"I am firm, my dear mother; for, as James said, the grief of griefs has been removed from me. I can now support myself under anything—but you—indeed, James, she is battling against illness these three or four days—and will not go to bed; it is for you I now feel, mother."

Mr. M'Loughlin and his family here entered; and truth to tell, boundless was the indignation of the honest fellow, at this most oppressive and perfidious proceeding on the part of the treacherous agent.

"Ah," said he, "I knew it—and I said it—but let the scoundrel do his worst; I scorn him, and I defy him in the very height of his ill-gotten authority. My children," said he, "keep yourselves cool. Let not this cowardly act of oppression and revenge disturb or provoke you. This country, as it is at present governed—and this property as it is at present managed—is no place for us to live in. Let the scoundrel then do his worst. As for us, we will follow the example of other respectable families, who, like ourselves, have been forced to seek a home in a distant country. We will emigrate to America, as soon as I can conveniently make arrangements for that purpose; for God knows I am sick of my native land, and the petty oppressors which in so many ways harass and goad the people almost to madness."

He had no sooner uttered these words, than the fellow whose name was Hudson, whispered to one of his companions, who immediately disappeared with something like a grin of exultation on his countenance. Mrs. M'Loughlin's illness was now such as she could no longer attempt to conceal. The painful shock occasioned by this last vindictive proceeding on the part of M'Clutchy, came at a most unhappy moment. Overcome by that and her illness, she was obliged to go to bed, aided by her husband and her daughter; but before she went, it was considered necessary to get one of the ruffians, as an act of favor, to take an inventory of the furniture in her chamber, in order that her sick room might not be intruded upon afterwards.

Mary having put her sick mother to bed, returned to the parlor, from whence she was proceeding to the kitchen, to make whey with her own hands for the invalid, when in passing along the hall, Harman and her brother John met her. She was in a hurry, and was about to pass without speaking a word, when she and they were startled by the following dialogue—

"So, Bob, did you see the pale beauty in the parlor?"

"I did, she's a devilish pretty girl."

"She is so—well, but do you know that she is one of Mr. Phil's ladies. Sure he was caught in her bed-room some time ago."

"Certainly, every one knows that; and it appears she is breaking her heart because he won't make an honest woman of her."

John caught his sister, whose agitation was dreadful, and led her away; making at the same time, a signal to Harman to remain quiet until his return—a difficult task, and Harman felt it so. In the meantime, the following appendix was added to the dialogue already detailed—

"Why do you hould such talk under this roof, Leeper?" asked a third voice.

The only reply given to this very natural query was a subdued cackle, evidently proceeding from the two first speakers.

"Do you both see that strong horse-pistol," said the third voice—for in those days an Execution was almost always levied by armed men—"by the Bible of truth, if I hear another word of such conversation from any man here while we're under this roof, I'll sink the butt of it into his skull! It's bad enough that we're here on an unpleasant duty—"

"Unpleasant! speak for yourself."

"Silence, you ruffian—on an unpleasant duty; but that's no reason that we should grieve the hearts and insult the feelings of a respectable family like this. The truth, or rather the blasted falsehood that was put out on the young lady is now known almost everywhere, for Poll Doolin has let out the truth."

"But didn't Misther Phil desire us to say it, so as that they might hear us."

"Mr. Phil's a cowardly scoundrel, and nothing else; but, mark me, Phil or no Phil, keep your teeth shut on that subject."

"Just as much or as little of that as we like, if you please, Mr. ——."

"Very well, you know my mind—so take the consequences, that's all."

"Here goes then," said the ruffian, speaking in a deliberately loud voice, "it's well known that Miss M'Loughlin is Misther Phil's ——"

A heavy blow, followed by a crash on the floor—a brief conflict as if with another person, another blow, and another crash fol-

lowed. Harman, in a state of feeling which our readers may imagine, but which we cannot describe, pushed in the door, which, in fact, was partially open.

"What, what is this?" he asked, pretending ignorance, "is it fighting among yourselves you are? Fie, fie! Gordon Harvey, what is the matter?"

"Only a little quarrel of our own, Mr. Harman," replied the excellent fellow. "The truth is, sir, that these men—ay, gather yourselves up, do; you ought to have known Gordon Harvey's blow, for you have often enough heard of it before now; there is no great mistake about that, you scoundrels—the truth is, Mr. Harman, that these fellows were primed with whiskey at M'Clutchy's and they gave me provoking language that I couldn't bear; it's well for them that I didn't take the butt end of that," said he, holding up the horse-pistol in his left hand, "but you'll find ten for one that would rather have a taste of it than of *this;*" shutting his right—which was a perfect sledge-hammer, and, when shut, certainly the more formidable weapon of the two.

The two ruffians had now gathered themselves up, and appeared to be considerably sobered by Harvey's arguments. They immediately retired to a corner of the room, where they stood with a sullen but vindictive look—cowardly and ferocious, ready to revenge on M'Loughlin's family the punishment which they had received, but durst not resent, at the hands of Harvey—unquestionably one of the most powerful and generous Orangemen that was ever known in Castle Cumber. Let us not for a moment be mistaken. The Orangemen of Ireland contained, and still contain among them, men of great generosity, courage, and humanity. This is undeniable and unquestionable; but then, it is well known that these men never took any part in the outrages perpetrated by the lower and grosser grades, unless to prevent outrage. In nothing, indeed, was the lamentable state of the Irish Church Establishment more painfully obvious than in the moral ignorance and brutal bigotry, which want of Christian instruction and enlightened education had entailed upon men, who otherwise have been a high-minded, brave, and liberal class, had they not been corrupted by the example of the very pastors—ungodly, loose, convivial, political, anything but Christian—from whom they were to expect their examples and their precepts. But to return. Harman having given a significant glance to Harvey, left the room, and the latter immediately followed him.

"Harvey," said he, "I have overheard the whole conversation; give me your hand, for it is that of an honest man. I thank you, I thank you—do try and prevent these ruffians from insulting the family."

"I don't think the same thing will happen a second time, Mr. Harman," replied the gigantic Orangeman; "but, the truth is, the men are half drunk, and were made so before they came here."

"Well, but I thank you, Harvey; deeply and from my soul, I thank you."

"You needn't, Mr. Harman; I hate a dirty and ungenerous thing. Phil's a brother Orangeman, and my tongue is tied — no doubt I'll be expelled for knocking these two scoundrels down, but I don't care; it was too bad and too cruel, and, let the upshot be what it may, Gordon Harvey is not the man to back a scoundrelly act, no matter who does it, or who orders it."

They shook hands cordially, and we now must leave the family for a time, to follow the course of other events that bear upon our narrative.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Bob Beatty's Last Illness—A Holy Steeple Chase—A Dead Heat—Blood against Varmint—Rival Claims—A Mutual Disappointment—The Last Plea for Salvation—Non Compos Mentis.

Our readers may remember that we have alluded to an Orangeman, named Bob Beatty, who had become a convert to the Church of Rome. This Beatty, on the part of the priest, was a very fair set-off against Darby O'Drive, on the part of Mr. Lucre. As they were now on the eve of the great discussion, each felt considerable gratification in having his convert ready to produce at the discussion, as a living proof of his zeal for religious truth. The principal vexation which the priest had felt, lay in the almost insuperable difficulty of keeping Bob from liquor, inasmuch as whenever he happened to take a glass too much, he always forgot his conversion, and generally drank the Glorious Memory, and all other charter toasts, from habit. It so happened, however, that a few days previous to the great Tournay, Bob became so ill in health, that there was little hope of his surviving any length of time. During this illness, he had several interviews with Father Roche, who informed him of the near approach of death, and prepared him, as well as could readily be done, to meet it; for truth to tell, he was at all times an impracticable subject on which to produce religious impressions. Be this as it may, a day or two previous to the discus-

sion, his wife, feeling that he was near his dissolution, and determined, if possible, that he should not die a Roman Catholic, went in a hurry for Mr. Clement, who happened to be in attendance on a funeral and was consequently from home. In the meantime, a Roman Catholic neighbor, hearing that she went to fetch the minister, naturally anxious that the man should not die a Protestant, lost no time in acquainting Father M'Cabe with his situation. Mrs. Beatty, however, finding that Mr. Clement was not to be procured, left her message with his family, and proceeded in all haste to Mr. Lucre's in order to secure his attendance.

"My good woman," said he, "your husband, I trust, is not in such danger. Mr. Clement cannot certainly be long absent, and he will attend; I am not quite well, or I should willingly go myself."

"Very well," said the woman, "between you, I suppose, you will let the priest, M'Cabe have him; and then it will be said he died a Papish."

"What's that?" inquired Mr. Lucre, with an interest which he could not conceal; "what has M'Cabe to do with him?"

"Why," returned the woman, "he has made him a Papish, but I want him to die a True Blue, and not shame the family."

"I shall attend," said Lucre; "I shall lose no time in attending. What's your husband's name?"

"Bob Beatty, sir."

"Oh, yes, he is subject to epilepsy."

"The same, sir."

She then gave him directions to find the house, and left him making very earnest and rapid preparations to do what he had not done for many a long year—attend a death-bed; and truly his absence was no loss.

In the meantime, Father M'Cabe having heard an account of Bob's state, and that the minister had been sent for, was at once upon the alert, and lost not a moment in repairing to his house. So very eager, indeed, were these gentlemen, and so equal their speed, that they met at the cross-roads, one of which turned to Bob's house. In the meantime, we may as well inform our readers here, that Bob himself had, in his wife's absence, privately sent for Father Roche. Each instantly suspected the object of the other, and determined in his own mind, if possible, to frustrate it.

"So, sir," said the priest, "you are on your way to Bob Beatty's, who is, as you know, one of *my* flock. But how do you expect to get through the business, Mr. Lucre, seeing that you are so long out of practice?"

"Bob Beatty was never, properly speaking, one of your flock, Mr. M'Cabe. I must beg leave to ride forward, sir, and leave you to your Christian meditations. One interview with you is enough for any man."

"Faith, but I love you too well to part with you so easily," said the priest, spurring on his horse, "cheek by jowl—and a beautiful one you have—will I ride with you, my worthy epicure; and, what is more, I'll anoint Bob Beatty before your eyes."

"And, perhaps, perform another miracle," replied Mr. Lucre, bitterly.

"Ay will I, if it be necessary," said the priest; "but I do most solemnly assure you that by far the most brilliant miracle of modern days is to find the Rev. Phineas Lucre at a sick-bed. Depend upon it, however, if Beatty had not turned Catholic, he might die like a dog for the same Mr. Lucre."

"I will not abstract the last shilling from his pocket for the unction of superstition, at all events."

"Not you, faith; you'll charge him nothing I grant, and right glad am I to find that you know the value of your services. You forget, however, that my flock pay you well for doing this nothing—that is, for discharging your duty—notwithstanding."

Both now pushed on at a rapid rate, growling at each other as they went along. On getting into the fields they increased their speed; and as the peasantry of both religions were apprised of the circumstances connected with Bob's complaint and conversion, each party cheered on their own champion.

"More power to you Father M'Cabe; give him the Latin and the Bravery!"*

"Success, Mr. Lucre! Push on, sir, and don't let the Popish rebel send him out of the world with a bandage on his eyes. Lay in the Bible, Mr. Lucre! Protestant and True Blue forever—hurra!"

"The true Church forever, Father M'Cabe, the jewel that you war! Give the horse the spurs, avourneen. Sowl, Paddy, but the *bodagh* parson has the advantage of him in the *cappul*. Push on, your reverence; you have the divil and the parson against you, for the one's drivin' on the other."

"Cross the corner of the Barny Mether's meadow, Mr. Lucre, and wheel in at the garden ditch; your horse can do it, although you ride the heaviest weight. Lay on him, sir, and think of Protestant Ascendancy. King William against Popery and wooden shoes; hurra!"

"Father, achora, keep your shoulder to

* Breviary.

the wind, and touch up *Parra Gastha** wid the spurs. A groan for the Protestant parson, father darlin'!"

"Three groans for the Popish Mass Book. Bravo, Mr. Lucre! That ditch was well cleared!"

"Devil a purtier, father jewel! Parra Gastha's a darlin', and brought you over like a bird—hurra!"

"Have you no whip, Mr. Lucre? Whip and spur, sir, or the Popish garran will be *in* before you. By the great Boyne, I'm afraid the charger's blown."

"God enable you, father avilish! Blown! Why what would you expect, an' it the first visit ever the same horse made to a sick-bed in his life; he now finds it isn't on the king's highway he is—and I'll go bail it's himself that's cursin' the same duty in his heart. Bravo, Father Pat! Parra Gastha's the boy that knows his duty—more power, Parra Gastha! Divil pursue the hair's turned on him; but, be me sowl, it wouldn't be so, if he led the life the Protestant blood did—feedin' high, and doin' nothin'."

"Mr. Lucre, pull out; I see you're hard up, sir, and so is your charger. Push him, sir, even if he should drop. Death and Protestantism before Popery and dishonor! Hurra, well done!"

"Ah, be me sowl, it's near the last gasp wid him and his masther, and no wondher; they're both divilish far out of their element. Faith, if they had Father M'Cabe and Parra Gastha's practice, they wouldn't be the show they are this minute. Well done both! fresh and fair, snug and dry, you do it. Hurra!"

When the two worthy gentlemen had reached Bob's house, they dismounted, each in a perspiration, and rushed to the bed of the dying man. Mr. Lucre sat, of course, at one side, and the priest at the other; Mr. Lucre seized the right hand, and the priest the left: whilst Bob looked at them both alternately, and gave a cordial squeeze to each.

"You thought, sir," said Mr. Lucre to the priest haughtily, "that he would have died an idolator."

Bob squeezed Mr. Lucre's hand again.

"And *you* thought," replied Father M'Cabe, "that he would die a Protestant or a heretic, which is the same thing."

Bob squeezed Father M'Cabe's hand once more.

"Gentlemen," said Bob, "be pleased to sit down—you are *both* Christian ministers, I hope."

"No," said Father M'Cabe, "there is but one of us a Christian; Mr. Lucre here is not worthy of the name, Bob."

Bob squeezed the priest's hand a third time.

"Beatty," said Mr. Lucre, "this is a solemn occasion, and I'm bound to say, that the priest here is merely a representative of Antichrist. This is not a time to disguise the truth."

Bob squeezed Mr. Lucre's hand a third time also.

"Beatty," continued Mr. Lucre, "if you permit yourself to die a Papist, you seal your own everlasting punishment."

"True," said Bob.

"Bob," said the priest, "if after the explanations of the true church which I have given you, you allow yourself to relapse into heresy, you will suffer for it during all eternity."

"True," said Bob.

"There is no hope for those, who, like the Papists and idolators, hew for themselves vessels that will hold no water," said Lucre.

"Ah, very right," said Bob.

"There is but one Faith, one Church, and one Baptism, and that is ours," said the priest.

"Ah, you can do it," said Bob, with a squeeze.

"Bob," said the wife, "what do you mean? I don't understand you—die a True Blue, and don't shame your friends."

"Gentlemen," said Bob, "I feel disposed to sleep a little. It is likely that a few minutes' rest may strengthen my weak body, and clear my mind for the consolations of religion, which you are both so beautifully prepared to give me. I feel rather drowsy, so I'll close my eyes for a few minutes, and doze a little."

Bob closed his eyes for about four mortal hours and a half, during which time our two worthy gentlemen sat at his bed-side with the most exemplary patience. At length he opened his eyes, and inquired for his daughter Fanny, who had been sent for Father Roche; to her he whispered a few words, after which she went out, but almost immediately returned. He looked at her inquiringly, and she answered:

"Yes, just as I expected—in a few minutes."

"Gentlemen," said Bob, "I am much aisier now; but I am at a loss whether to be prepared for heaven by you, Mr. Lucre, or by Father M'Cabe."

"Beatty," said Lucre, "you have had access to the Bible, and possessing, as you do, and as you must, the Scriptural knowledge gained from that sacred book, to die in the church which worships crucifixes and im-

* Literally, Paddy Speedy.

"AH! VERY RIGHT," SAID BOB.—*Val M'Cluddy*, chap. xxvii., p. 332.

ages, would leave you without hope or excuse."

"Ah!" said Bob, "you are sound in point of doctrine. No man is more orthodox than you."

"Bob," said the priest, "you know what the Council of Trent says:—'There is but one Church, one Faith, and one Baptism'—if you die out of that church, which is ours, woe betide you. No, Bob, there is no hope for you if you die an apostate, Bob."

"Ah," said Bob, "you can send it home, Father M'Cabe."

"Bob," said the wife, "die a True Blue, and don't shame the family."

"There is but a blue look up for you if you do," said Father M'Cabe.

"Blue is the emblem of hope, and for that reason the Orange system has adopted it as illustrative of our faith," said Mr. Lucre.

He had scarcely uttered the words, when Father Roche entered the sick apartment. High and haughty was the bow he received from Mr. Lucre; whilst Father M'Cabe seemed somewhat surprised at the presence of the reverend gentlemen. The latter looked mildly about him, wiped the moisture from his pale forehead and said—

"Mrs. Beatty, will you indulge me with a chair? On my return home I lost not a moment in coming here; but the *walk* I have had is a pretty long one, the greater part of it being up-hill."

"Well," replied Mrs. Beatty, "I'm not the woman to think one thing and speak another. To be sure, I'd rather he would die a True Blue than a Papish; but since he will die one, I'd rather have you at his side than e'er a priest in the kingdom. If there *is* a Christian among them, you are one—you are—so, Bob dear, since you're bent on it, I won't disturb you."

"Bring your chair near me," said Bob; "where is your hand, my dear sir? Give me your hand." Poor Bob caught Father Roche's hand in his, and pressed it honestly and warmly.

"Bob," said Mr. Lucre, "I don't understand this; in what creed are you disposed to die?"

"You see, sir," said M'Cabe, "that he won't die in *yours* at any rate."

"You will not die in my creed!" repeated the parson, astonished.

"No," said Bob; "I will not."

"You will then die in *mine*, of course?" said Mr. M'Cabe.

"No," replied Bob; "I will not."

"How is that?" said the priest.

"Explain yourself," said Mr. Lucre.

"*I'll die a Christian*," replied Bob. "You're both anything but what you ought to be; and if I wasn't on my death-bed you'd hear more of it. Here is a Christian clergyman, and under his ministry I will die."

"Ah," said Mr. Lucre, "I perceive, Mrs. Beatty, that the poor man's intellect is gone; whilst his reason was sound he remained a staunch Protestant, and as such, we shall claim him. He must be interred according to the rights of our church, for he dies clearly *non compos mentis*."

Father Roche now addressed himself to Beatty, and prepared him for his great change, as became a pious and faithful minister of the gospel. Beatty, however, was never capable of serious impressions. Still, his feelings were as solemn as could be expected, from a man whose natural temperament had always inclined him to facetiousness and humor. He died the next day, after a severe fit, from which he recovered only to linger about half an hour in a state of stupor and insensibility.

This conflict between the priest and the parson was a kind of prelude in its way, to the great Palaver, or discussion, which was immediately to take place between the redoubtable champions of the rival churches.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Preparations for the Great Discussion, which we do not give—Extraordinary Hope of a Modern Miracle—Darby is a Spiritual Ganymede—Solomon like an Angel looking into the Gospel.

On the morning of the appointed day, the walls of Castle Cumber were duly covered with placards containing the points to be discussed, and the names of the speakers on both sides of the question. The roads leading to the scene of controversy were thronged with people of all classes. Private jaunting cars, gigs, and carriages of every description, rolled rapidly along. Clergymen of every creed, various as they are, moved through the streets with eager and hurried pace, each reverend countenance marked by an anxious expression arising from the interest its possessor felt in the result of the controversy. People, in fact, of all ranks and religions, were assembled to hear the leading men on each side defend their own creeds, and assail those of their enemies. The professional men relinquished, for the day, their other engagements and avocations, in order to be present; and invalids, who had not been long out of their sick rooms, tottered down, wrapped in cloaks, to hear this great display of learning and eloquence. Early on the preceding morning, the Catho-

lic Clergy, though without the sanction of their Bishops, formally signified to the committee of the society, their intention of meeting them man to man on the platform. Before the door was open to the crowd at large, the opposing clergymen and the more select friends on both sides were admitted by a private entrance. The gallery was set aside for ladies, who, in Ireland, and we believe everywhere else, form an immense majority at religious meetings.

When the house was thronged to suffocation, none but a man intimately acquainted with the two-fold character of the audience, could observe much more within it, than the sea of heads with which it was studded. The Protestant party looked on with a less devoted, but freer aspect; not, however, without an evident feeling and pride in the number and character of their champions. A strong dash of enthusiasm might be seen in many fair eyes among the females, who whispered to each other an occasional observation concerning their respective favorites; and then turned upon the divine champions, smiles that seemed to have been kindled by the sweet influences of love and piety. Among the Roman Catholic party there was an expression of wonder created by the novelty of the scene; of keen observation, evinced by the incessant rolling of their clear Milesian eyes from one party to another, together with something like pity and contempt for the infatuated Biblemen, as they called them, who could so madly rush upon the sharp theological spears of their own beloved clergymen. Dismay, or doubt, or apprehension of any kind, were altogether out of the question, as was evident from the proud look, the elated eye, and the confident demeanor by which each of them might be distinguished. Here and there, you might notice an able-bodied, coarse-faced Methodist Preacher, with lips like sausages, sombre visage, closely cropped hair, trimmed across his face, sighing from time to time, and, with eyes half closed, offering up a silent prayer for victory over the Scarlet Lady; or, perhaps, thinking of the fat ham and chicken that were to constitute that day's dinner, as was not improbable, if the natural meaning were to be attached to the savory spirit with which, from time to time, he licked, or rather sucked at, his own lips. He and his class, many of whom, however, are excellent men, sat at a distance from the platform, not presuming to mingle with persons who consider them as having no title to the clerical character, except such as they conveniently bestow on each other. Not so the Presbyterian Clergymen who were present. They mingled with their brethren of the Establishment, from whom they differed only in a less easy and gentlemanly deportment, but yielded to them neither in kindness of intellect, firmness, nor the cool adroitness of men well read, and quite as well experienced in public speaking. At the skirt of the platform sat the unassuming Mr. Clement, a calm spectator of the proceedings; and in the capacity of messenger appeared Darby O'Drive, dressed in black—he had not yet entered upon the duties of his new office—busily engaged in bringing in, and distributing oranges and other cooling fruit, to those of the Protestant party who were to address the meeting. High aloft, in the most conspicuous situation on the platform, sat Solomon M'Slime, breathing of piety, purity, and humility. He held a gilt Bible in his hands, in order to follow the parties in their scriptural quotations, and to satisfy himself of their accuracy, as well as that he might fall upon some blessed text, capable of enlarging his privileges. There was in his countenance a serene happiness, a sweet benignity, a radiance of divine triumph, partly arising from the consciousness of his own inward state, and partly from the glorious development of scriptural truth which would soon be witnessed, to the utter discomfiture of Popery and the Man of Sin. For some time before the business of the day commenced, each party was busily engaged in private conferences; in marking passages for reference, arranging notes, and fixing piles of books in the most convenient position. Mr. Lucre was in full pomp, exceedingly busy, directing, assisting, and tending their wants, with a proud courtesy, and a suavity of manner, which no man could better assume. The deportment and manners of the Roman Catholic clergy were strongly marked, and exceedingly well defined; especially in determination of character and vigor of expression. In a word, they were firm, resolute, and energetic. Among the latter, the busiest by far, and the most zealous was Father M'Cabe, who assumed among his own party much the same position that Mr. Lucre did among his. He was, no doubt of it, in great glee, and searched out for Mr. Lucre's eye, in order to have a friendly glance with him, before the play commenced. Lucre perceived this, and avoided him as much as he could; but, in fact, the thing was impossible. At length he caught the haughty parson's eye, and exclaimed with a comical grin, which was irresistible—

"I am glad to see you here, Mr. Lucre; who knows, but we may make a Christian of you yet. You know that we, as Catholics, maintain that the power of working miracles

is in the Church still; and that, certainly, would prove it."

Mr. Lucre bowed, and smiled contemptuously, but made no reply.

When the chairman was appointed, and the regulations by which the meeting was to be guided, read and assented to by both parties, the *melée* commenced; and, indeed, we are bound to say, that a melancholy comment upon Christian charity it was. It is not our intention to give anything like a report of this celebrated discussion, inasmuch, as two reports, each the genuine and authentic one, and each most egregiously contradictory of the other, have been for several years before the public, who, consequently, have a far better right to understand the business than we do, who are at this distant date merely the remote historian.

We may be permitted to say, however, that the consequences of this great discussion were such as are necessarily produced by every exhibition of the kind. For a considerable time afterwards nothing was heard between Catholic and Protestant but fierce polemics, and all the trite and wordy arguments that are to be found in the mouths of ignorant and prejudiced men on both sides. The social harmony of the district was disturbed, and that friendly intercourse which should subsist between neighbors, was either suspended or destroyed. A fierce spirit of exacerbation and jealousy was created, and men looked upon each other with bitterness and resentment; whilst to complete the absurdity, neither party could boast of a single convert to attest the glory of the triumph which each claimed.

At this period, the character of the Castle Cumber yeomanry corps, or as they were called, M'Clutchy's Blood-hounds, was unquestionably in such infamous odor with all but bigots, in consequence of their violence when upon duty, that a few of the more mild and benevolent gentry of the neighborhood, came to the determination of forming a corps composed of men not remarkable for the extraordinary and exclusive loyalty which put itself forth in so many offensive and oppressive forms. Deaker's Dashers were by no means of such rancid bigotry as M'Clutchy's men, although they were, heaven knows, much worse than they ought to have been.

Their most unjustifiable excesses, however, were committed in his absence, and without his orders; for it is due to Deaker himself to say, that, although a staunch political Protestant and infidel, he never countenanced violence against those who differed from him in creed. Deaker's creed was a very peculiar one, and partook of the comic profligacy which marked his whole life. He believed, for instance, that *Protestantism* was necessary, but could not for the life of him understand the nature or tendency of *religion*. As he himself said, the three great Protestant principles and objects of his life were—to drink the "Glorious Memory"—"To hell with the Pope"—merely because he was not a Protestant—and to "die whistling the Boyne Water." If he could accomplish these successfully, he thought he had discharged his duty to his king and country, and done all that could be fairly expected from an honest and loyal Protestant. And, indeed, little, if anything else, in a religious way, was expected from him, or from any other person, at the period of which we write.

Be this, however, as it may, the formation of a new corps of cavalry was determined on, and by unanimous consent, the conduct of the matter in all its departments was entrusted to Mr. Hartley, the gentleman already mentioned, as selected to contest the county against Lord Cumber or his brother, for it had not yet been decided on between them, as to which of them should stand. Lord Cumber expected an Earldom for his virtues, with a seat in the house of Lords, and should these honors reach him in time, then his brother, the Hon. Richard Topertoe, should be put in nomination. In point of fact, matters between the two parties were fast drawing to a crisis, and it was also in some degree to balance interests with Lord Cumber, and neutralize the influence of the Irish government, that Hartley and his friends deemed it advisible to have a cavalry corps at their disposal. The day of the dissolution of parliament was now known, and it naturally became necessary that each candidate should be found at his post.

It was at this very period that a circumstance occurred, which, although of apparently small importance, was nevertheless productive of an incident that will form the catastrophe of our chronicles. Our readers cannot forget the warm language which passed between the man Sharpe and our exquisite friend, Philip M'Clutchy, on their way from Deaker's. Now, it is due to this man to say, that, on looking back at the outrage which occurred in O'Regan's cottage, and reflecting upon the melancholy consequences it produced—not forgetting the heart-rending insanity of O'Regan's wife—he felt deep regret, amounting almost to remorse, for the part which he bore in it. Independently of this, however, the conduct of Phil and his father, in their military capacity over the corps, was made up of such tyrranical insolence at one time, and of such contemptible meanness at another, that the men

began to feel disgusted with such sickening alternations of swaggering authority, and base, calculating policy. Many of them, consequently, were heartily tired of their officers, and had already begun to think of withdrawing altogether from the corps, unless there were some change for the better made in it. Now, at this precise state of feeling, with regard to both circumstances, had Sharpe arrived, when he met his lieutenant on the day when that gallant gentleman signalized himself by horsewhipping his grandmother. Phil's threat had determined him to return to the Dashers, but, on hearing a day or two afterwards, that Hartley was about to raise a new corps, composed of well-conducted and orderly men, he resolved not only to offer himself to that gentleman, but to induce all who were moderate among the "hounds," and, indeed, they were not many, to accompany him. This alarmed M'Clutchy very much, because on Lord Cumber's arrival to canvass the county, it would look as if his Lordship's interests had been neglected; and he feared, too, that the withdrawing of the men from his corps might lead to investigations which were strongly to be deprecated. After a day or two's inquiries, therefore, and finding that from eighteen to twenty of his youngest and most respectable yeomanry had not only returned him their arms and appointments, but actually held themselves ready to be enrolled in the Annagh Corps—for so Hartley's was termed—he sat down and wrote the following letter to Lord Cumber:—

"Constitution Cottage, June—

"My Lord:

"Circumstances affecting your Lordship's personal and political interests have recently occurred here, and are even now occurring, which render it my painful duty to communicate with you on the subject without loss of time. I am sorry to say that the conduct of Mr. Hartley, your well known opponent for the county, is not that which becomes a high-minded man. The Cavalry Corps of which your Lordship is Colonel, and which, by the way, has rendered good service in the firm discharge of their duty, has been very much damaged by the extraordinary conduct which that gentleman is pursuing. The fact is, that he has taken it into his head, aided and assisted of course by his friends and political supporters, to raise a corps of Yeomanry Cavalry as it were, in opposition to ours; and this, no doubt, he has a right to do; although I am quite certain, at the same time, that it is done with a view to secure either the support, or at least the neutrality of government; which neutrality would, as your Lordship knows, be a heavy blow to us. However, as I said, he has as good a right as we have to raise his corps; but I do not think he is justified in writing private circulars, or in tampering with the men of *our* corps, many of whom he has already seduced from their duty, and lured over with honeyed words and large promises to the body he is raising. The fact is, my Lord, if our men were not so devotedly attached to my son and myself as they are, Hartley's unjustifiable interference would leave the corps a mere skeleton. As it is, he has taken eighteen of our very best men from us; by best, I allude only to youth and physical energy, for I need scarcely say, that all the staunch and loyal fellows remain with us. I am sorry to add that Mr. Hickman, as I predicted he would, is vigorously supporting your opponent; and there is a scoundrel here who is often closeted with him—a rascally painter named Easel, *quem ego*—you see I have a little of my Latin still, my Lord. The fellow—this wild goose, Easel, I mean—says he has come to the neighborhood to take sketches; but if I don't mistake much I shall ere long put him in a condition to sketch the Bay of Sidney. I have already reported him to government, and, indeed, I have every reason to suppose he is a Popish Agent, sent here to sow the seeds of treason and disaffection among the people. Nothing else can account for the dreadful progress which Whiteboyism has made upon your Lordship's property, where it is much more outrageous and turbulent than in any other district that I am acquainted with. I have also to acquaint you, my Lord, that even if I were disposed to keep M'Loughlin and Harman on the property—that is, granting that I were sufficiently treacherous to your interest to do so, it is now out of my power. Their own dishonesty has at length fallen upon their heads. They are bankrupts, and not now in a condition to pay a renewal fine for their leases; but I am happy to inform your Lordship, that my son Phil, and Mr. M'Slime, have each offered five hundred pounds for their respective holdings—a tender which I might in vain expect from any other quarter and which I cannot conscientiously refuse.

"Harman was acquitted for the murder of Harpur—in consequence, it is thought, of a treacherous scoundrel, named Sharpe, who was once one of our corps, having taken a bribe to give evidence in his favor. This same Sharpe is to be a sergeant in Hartley's corps; and, when I say that Hartley and Harman are and have been on very intimate terms, I think it shows how the wind blows between them, at all events. I have been receiving rent yesterday and to-day, and can-

not but regret the desperate state to which things have been brought. There is no getting in money, and the only consolation I feel is, that I have honestly and conscientiously discharged my duty. I have cleared a great number of our enemies from the property, but, unfortunately, such is the state of things here, that there is the greater number of the holdings still unoccupied, other tenants that we could depend on being afraid to enter upon them, in consequence of the spirit of intimidation that is abroad. This M'Loughlin is certainly a most consummate swindler: he was unable to pay his rent, and I sent in an execution yesterday; but, as every one knows, fourteen days must elapse before the public auction of property takes place. Judge of my surprise then, when, short as was the time, an affidavit has been made before me, that he and his family have come to the determination of emigrating to America, and, I suppose, by the aid of a midnight mob to take away all that is valuable of their property by force. I consequently must remove it at once, as the law, under such circumstances, empowers me to do—for I cannot sit by and suffer your lordship to be robbed, in addition to being both misrepresented and maligned by these men and their families. Granting the full force, however, of this unpleasant intelligence, still I do not think it necessary that you should at present leave the circles of polished and fashionable life in which you move, to bury yourself here among a set of malignant barbarians, who would scruple very little to slit your lordship's weasand, or to shoot you from behind a hedge.

"I am in correspondence with Counsellor Browbeater, at the Castle, who, in addition to the glorious privilege of being, as he deserves to be, free of the Back Trot there, is besides a creature after my own heart. We are both engaged in attempting to bring the Spy System to that state of perfection which we trust may place it on a level with that fine old institution, so unjustly abused, called the Inquisition. Browbeater is, indeed, an exceedingly useful man to the present government, and does all that in him lies, I mean out of his own beat, to prevent them from running into financial extravagance. For instance, it was only the other day that he prevented a literary man with a large family from getting a pension from the Premier, who, between you and me, my lord, is no great shake; and this was done in a manner that entitles him to a very lasting remembrance indeed. The principle upon which he executed this interesting and beautiful piece of treachery—for treachery of *this* kind, my lord, is in the catalogue of public virtues—was well worthy of imitation by every man emulous of office; it was that of professing to be a friend to the literary man, whilst he acted the spy upon his private life, and misrepresented him to the Minister. Oh, you do not know, my lord, how the heart of such a man as I am, warms to the author of this manly act of private treachery and public virtue, and I cannot help agreeing with my friend M'Slime, who, when he heard it, exclaimed with tears of admiration in his eyes, 'it is beautiful—verily the virtuous iniquity of it refreshes me! May that mild, meek, and most gentlemanly Christian, Mr. Browbeater, be rewarded for it! And may the day never come when he shall require to tread in the footsteps of the devil!' Indeed, my lord, I cannot help crying *amen* to this, and adding; that the remembrance of his virtues may descend and reflect honor on his posterity, as, I have no doubt, they will do. How few like him could transfuse the spirit of the Tipperary assassin into the moral principles of the Castle, *for useful* purpose? I beg to inclose, your lordship, Mr. Hartley's circular, which, I think, contains an indirect reflection on certain existing bodies of a similar nature, and is therefore, in my opinion, very offensive to us; I also enclose you others which he has written to several of your tenants, who are already members of your own corps,

"I have the honor to be, &c., &c.,

"VAL M'CLUTCHY."

The following is the circular alluded to above—

"SIR: As a proposal to raise an additional yeomanry corps of *respectable* cavalry in Castle Cumber and its vicinity is about to be submitted to the Lord Lieutenant, in order to receive his approbation, your presence is requested at Sam Company's Castle Cumber Arms, at twelve o'clock on Friday next, when it is proposed to name officers, and adopt such further measures as may appear most conducive to the embodiment of the corps with expedition and effect.

"I am, sir,

"Your humble servant,

"HENRY HARTLEY."

To his letter Val received the following reply—

"Belgrave Square.

"DEAR SIR: I received your letter, and perfectly agree with you as to the offensive nature of Mr. Hartley's circular, many of which I have had in my possession for some time past. With respect to him, I have only to say, that he and I have agreed to arrange

that matter between us, as soon as I reach Castle Cumber. I am sorry that any of my tenants should deserve the character which M'Loughlin and his partner have received at your hand; I dare say, however, that if they did not deserve it they would not get it. The arrangements for their removal, of course I leave as I hitherto have left everything within the sphere of your duty, to your own sense of honesty and justice. *Do not, however, take harsh or sudden steps.* In the meantime lose not a moment in remitting the needful.

"Yours, &c.,

"CUMBER."

It is not at all likely that Lord Cumber would ever have noticed Hartley's circular, or troubled himself about the formation of the new corps in the slightest degree were it not for the malignity of M'Clutchy, who not only hated the whole family of the Hartleys from the same principle on which a knave hates an honest man, but in remembrance of that gentleman's cousin having, in his office, and in his own presence, kicked his son Phil and pulled his nose. When enclosing the circular, therefore, to his lordship, he underlined the word "respectable," by which it was made to appear deliberately offensive. Whether it was used with the design of reflecting upon the licentious violence of the blood-hounds, we pretend not to say, but we can safely affirm that the word in the original document was never underlined by Hartley. Lord Cumber, like his old father, was no coward, and the consequence was, that having once conceived the belief that the offensive term in the circular was levelled at his own corps—although he had never even seen it—he, on the receipt of M'Clutchy's letter, came to the determination of writing to Hartley upon the subject.

Lord Cumber to Henry Hartley, Esq.:—

"SIR: I have just perused a circular written by you, calling a meeting at the Castle Cumber Arms, with the object of forming what you are pleased to term, a yeomanry corps of *respectable* cavalry. Now you are perfectly at liberty to bestow whatever epithets you wish upon your new corps, provided these epithets contain no unfair insinuation against existing corps. I think, therefore, that whilst others have been for some time already formed in the neighborhood, your use of the term respectable was, to say the least of it, unhandsome. I also perceive that you have written to some of my tenants, who are already enrolled in the Castle Cumber corps, and am informed that several of my men have already given up their arms and clothing, on account of an application from you to join your corps. I presume, sir, you did not know that these persons belonged to the Castle Cumber troops, for, however anxious in the cause you may be, I need not point out to you a very obvious fact—to wit—that weakening a corps already embodied only tends to defeat the purpose for which it was designed. I take it, therefore, for granted, that no gentleman, however great his influence, would ask any soldier to desert his colors, and I am sure you will tell those men that they ought to remain in the body in which they were enrolled, and in which enrollment their names have been returned to the war office. In conclusion, I think that the tenant who does not reserve to himself the power of serving the landlord under whom he derives the whole of his property, is, in my opinion, both ungrateful and unprincipled: and he who solicits him to resign that essential reservation is, I think, extremely *indelicate*.

"I am, &c.,

CUMBER."

To this Mr. Hartley sent the following:—

"MY LORD: I cannot at all recognize the tyrannical principle you lay down in your definition of the relations between landlord and tenant. I deny that a tenant *necessarily* owes any such slavish and serf-like duty to his landlord as you advocate; and I am of opinion, that the landlord who enforces, or attempts to enforce such a duty, is stretching his privileges beyond their proper limits. I do not understand that any of your lordship's tenantry have been solicited to join our new corps. I have signed circular letters for my own tenantry, and if any of them have reached yours, it has been without either my consent or knowledge.

"I have the honor to be,

"My lord, &c.,

"HENRY HARTLEY."

Lord Cumber to Henry Hartley, Esq.:—

"SIR: I beg to inquire whether you apply the word *tyrannical* to me?

"I have the honor, &c.,

"CUMBER."

Henry Hartley, Esq., to the Right Hon. Lord Cumber:—

"MY LORD: I think if you had read my last communication with due attention, you might have perceived that I applied the term which seems to offend you, to your principles, rather than to yourself. So long as your lordship continues, however, to advocate such a principle, so long shall I associate it with the epithet in question.

"I have the honor, &c.,

"HENRY HARTLEY."

Lord Cumber to Henry Hartley, Esq. :—

"Sir : Your letter merely contains a distinction without a difference. So long as I identify my principles with myself, or myself with my principles, so long shall I look upon any offence offered to the one as offered to the other. The principle, therefore, which *you* brand with the insulting epithet tyrannical, is one which *I* hold, and ever shall hold ; because I believe it to be just and *not* tyrannical. I await your explanation, and trust it may be satisfactory.

"I have the honor to be, &c.,
"Cumber."

Henry Hartley, Esq., to the Right Hon. Lord Cumber :—

"My Lord : I am not anxious to have a quarrel with you, and I believe you will admit that the courage neither of myself nor any one of my family was never called in question. I really regret that any serious misunderstanding should arise between us, from this mere play upon words. I trust, therefore, to your Lordship's good sense, and good feeling, not to press me on this occasion.

"I have the honor, &c.,
"Henry Hartley."

Lord Cumber to Henry Hartley, Esq. :—

"Sir : I never doubted your courage until *now*. I have only to say, that I beg an answer to my *last* letter.

"I have the honor, &c.,
"Cumber."

Henry Hartley, Esq., to Lord Cumber :—

"My Lord : Your Lordship will find it in my last but *one*.

"I have the honor, &c., &c.,
"Henry Hartley."

Lord Cumber to Henry Hartley, Esq. :—

"Sir : I beg to say that I shall be in Castle Cumber within a fortnight from this date, and that you shall have early and instant notice of my arrival.

"I remain, &c.,
"Cumber."

Henry Hartley, Esq., to Lord Cumber :—

"And I, my Lord, shall be ready to meet you either there or anywhere else,

"And have the honor, &c.,
"Henry Hartley."

In the meantime, and whilst this correspondence was going forward, the political feeling about Castle Cumber rose rapidly between the adherents and friends of each. M'Clutchy called a meeting of Lord Cumber's friends and his own, which was held in the public rooms of Castle Cumber. The following is the report taken from the columns of the "*True Blue :*"—"At a special meeting of the committee of the Castle Cumber cavalry, held in that town on Monday, the 15th March, 18—, Lieutenant Philip M'Clutchy in the chair.

"Captain Valentine M'Clutchy having communicated to certain of the Castle Cumber corps a circular letter, as well as committee to the effect that Henry Hartley, Esq., having directed private letters, influencing them to withdraw therefrom, and join a troop which he is now about raising, and that in consequence of these steps on his part, several of the Castle Cumber troopers had deserted, and were enrolled in the new corps :—

"And Captain M'Clutchy having laid before the said Committee a copy of a letter which he had drawn up to be sent to Henry Hartley, Esq., and the Committee, having taken the same into their most serious consideration :—

"It was unanimously resolved—That any attempt to induce the defection of any members enrolled in such corps, even to join another corps, is highly injurious to the Institution at large, inasmuch, as it holds out a pernicious example of desertion, and above all, is calculated to excite a jealous electioneering spirit, and create enmity between the yeomanry troops, whose utility and value to the country depend on unanimity and mutual good will.

"Resolved—That the above resolution, together with the following letter signed by the Chairman in the name of the meeting, be forwarded to Henry Hartley, Esq.:

"'Sir—Having associated for the safety and quiet of this portion of the country, as well as for the protection of our families and properties, we feel ourselves particularly called upon, on an occasion like the present, to stand forward and repel the attack made upon this loyal corps, and, indeed, on the whole body of yeomanry throughout this kingdom—in spiriting away, by your letters and undue influence, some of our members, and attempting to procure others to be withdrawn from a corps already enrolled, armed, and complete. Be assured, sir, we shall be at all times ready, and happy to afford every assistance in the formation of any new corps in our neighborhood, provided this co-operation shall have no effect in diminishing our own.

"'We, therefore, call upon you to reflect on the measures you have taken and are taking, and not to persevere in the error of keeping such deserters from *our* troop as have joined *yours ;* as we shall in the case of

your persisting to do so, most certainly publish the whole course of your proceedings in this matter for the satisfaction of our loyal brethren throughout the kingdom, and leave them to decide between you and us.

"'PHILIP M'CLUTCHY, Chairman.
"'VALENTINE M'CLUTCHY, Captain.
"'RICHARD ARMSTRONG, Second Lieutenant.
"'ROBERT M'BULLET.
"'CHARLES CARTRIDGE.
"'BONIFACE BUCKRAM.
"'DUDLEY FULTON, Secretary.'"

To these documents, which were so artfully worded as to implicate Hartley without openly committing themselves, that gentleman having already had the understanding with Lord Cumber of which our readers are already cognizant, made the following brief reply.

"To Richard Armstrong, Esq., second Lieutenant of the Castle Cumber Cavalry:—

"SIR: I have received two resolutions passed at a meeting of your troop in Castle Cumber, and regret to say, for the sake of the Yeomanry service of the country, that I cannot send any communication to those who bear the two first names on your committee. I trust I am a gentleman, and that I shall not knowingly be found corresponding with any *but* gentlemen. I have only now simply to say, that I repel with great coolness—for indignation I feel none—the charges that have been brought against me, both in the resolutions, and the letter which accompanied them. Neither shall I take further notice of any letters or resolutions you may send me, as I have no intention in future of corresponding with any one on the subject, with the exception of Lord Cumber himself, with whom I have had recent communications touching this matter.

"I am, sir, &c.,
"HENRY HARTLEY."

Our readers are, no doubt, a good deal surprised, that Phil, knowing, from sad experience, the courage for which all the Hartley family were so remarkable, should have ventured to undertake the post of chairman, on an occasion where such charges were advanced against the gentleman in question. And, indeed, so they ought to be surprised, as upon the following morning no man living felt that sensation so deeply or painfully as did worthy Phil himself, who experienced the tortures of the damned. The whole secret of the matter, therefore, is, that Phil had lately taken to drink—to drink at all hours too—morning, noon, and night. In vain did his father remonstrate with him upon the subject; in vain did he entreat on one occasion and command on another. Phil, who was full of valor under certain circumstances, told his father he did not care a curse for him, and d—d his honor if he would allow him to curb him in that manner. The fact is, that Phil was at the present period of our tale, as corrupt and profligate a scoundrel as ever walked the earth. His father had no peace with him, and received little else at his hands than contempt, abuse, and threats of being horsewhipped. Perhaps if our readers can remember the extermination scene at *Drum Dhu*, together with the appearance of Kate Clank, they will be disposed to think that the son's conduct now, was very like judicial punishment on the father for what his own had been. Be this as it may—on the following morning after the meeting at Castle Cumber, Phil's repentance, had it been in a good cause, ought to have raised him to the calendar. In truth, it rose to actual remorse.

"Damn my honor, M'Clutchy"—for that was now the usual respectful tone of his address to him—"were you not a precious old villain to allow me to take the chair yesterday, when you knew what cursed fire-eaters these Hartleys are?"

"That, Phil, comes of your drinking brandy so early in the day. The moment you were moved into the chair—and, by the way, I suspect M'Bullet had a mischievous design in it—I did everything in my power, that man could do, to prevent you from taking it."

"It's a d——d bounce, M'Clutchy, you did no such thing, I tell you. D—n you altogether, I say! I would rather the devil had the whole troop, as he will too, with Captain M'Clutchy at the head of them—"

"Don't get into insubordination, my hero," said his father; "why do you put me over Lord Cumber's head?"

"Ay," replied the son, "when sending you to Headquarters, you mean; yes, my old knave, and when he and you and the whole kit of you get there, you'll know then what permanent duty means. That scoundrel Hartley will be sending a challenge to me."

"Make your mind easy, Phil," replied his virtuous father, "there is not the slightest danger of that; here's his reply to Armstrong, which Dick himself handed me in Castle Cumber a while ago. Read that and let it console you."

Phil accordingly read Hartley's letter, in which both he and his father were mentioned with such marked respect; and never did reprieve come to a shivering, inanimate, and

hopeless felon with the hangman's noose neatly settled under his left ear, with a greater sense of relief than did this communication to him. In fact, he had reached that meanness and utter degradation of soul which absolutely feels comfort, and is glad to take refuge, in the very contempt of an enemy.

"I hope you're satisfied," said his father.

"All right, my old fellow—all right, Captain M'Clutchy, Magistrate and Grand-juror. Damn my honor, but you're a fine old cock, Val—and now I have spirits to take a glass of brandy, which I hadn't this whole morning before."

"Phil," said the father, "how do you think I can ever get you appointed to the magistracy if you take to drink?"

"Drink! why, blood, my old boy, is it this to me! Do you mean to tell me that there are no drunken magistrates on the bench? Drink! why, man, let me drink, swear, and play the devil among the ladies, surely you know that my thorough Protestantism and loyalty will make up for, and redeem all. Hey, then, for the glass of brandy, in which I'll drink your health, and hang me, I'll not abuse you again—unless when you deserve it, ha, ha, ha!"

"At all events," said Val, "keep yourself steady for this day; this is the day, Phil, on which I will glut my long cherished vengeance against Brian M'Loughlin—against him and his. I shall leave them this night without a roof over their heads, as I said I would, and, Phil, when you are in possession of his property and farm, and he and his outcasts, he will then understand what I meant, when I told him with a boiling heart in Castle Cumber Fair, that *his farm and mine lay snugly together.*"

"But what will you do with the sick woman, I mean his wife?" asked Phil, putting a glass of brandy to his lips, and winking at his father; "what will you do with the sick woman, I say?"

Val's face became so frightfully ghastly, and presented so startling a contrast between his complexion and black bushy brows, that even Phil himself got for a moment alarmed, and said:—

"My God, father, what is the matter?"

Val literally gasped, as if seeking for breath, and then putting his hand upon his heart, he said—

"Phil, I am sick here—"

"I see you are," said Phil, "but what is the matter, I say again? why are you sick?"

"Vengeance, Phil; I AM SICK WITH VENGEANCE! The moment is now near, and at last I have it within my clutch;" and here he extended his hand, and literally made a clutch at some imaginary object in the air.

"Upon my honor," said Philip, "I envy you; you are a fine, consistent old villain."

"The sick woman, Phil! By the great heavens, and by all that they contain—if they do contain anything—I swear, that if every individual of them, men and women, were at the last gasp, and within one single moment of death—ha! hold," said he, checking himself, "that would never do. Death! why death would end all their sufferings."

"Oh, not *all*, I hope," said Phil, winking again.

"No matter," resumed Val, "their sufferings in this life it would end, and so I should no longer be either eye-witness or ear-witness of their destitution and miseries. I would see them, Phil, without house or home—without a friend on earth—without raiment, without food—ragged, starved—starved out of their very virtues—despised, spat upon, and trampled on by all! To these, Phil, I thought to have added shame—*shame;* but we failed—we have failed."

"No," replied Phil, "I give you my word, we did not."

"We did, sir," said the father; "Harman and she are now reconciled, and this is enough for the people, who loved her. Yes, by heavens, we have failed." Val sat, or almost dropped on a chair as he spoke, for he had been pacing through the parlor until now; and putting his two hands over his face, he sobbed out—groaned even with agony—until the tears literally gushed in torrents through his fingers. "I thought to have added shame to all I shall make them suffer," he exclaimed; "but in that I am frustrated." He here actually clenched his hands and gnashed his teeth, like a man in the last stage of madness.

On removing his hands, too, his face, now terribly distorted out of its lineaments by the convulsive workings of this tremendous passion, presented an appearance which one might rather suppose to have been shaped in hell, so unnaturally savage and diabolical were all its outlines.

Phil, who had sat down at the same time, with his face to the back of the chair, on which his two hands were placed, supporting his chin, kept his beautiful eyes, seated as he was in that graceful attitude, fixed upon his father with a good deal of surprise. Indeed it would be a difficult thing, considering their character and situation, to find two countenances more beautifully expressive of their respective dispositions. If one could conceive the existence of any such thing as a moral looking-glass placed be-

tween them, it might naturally be supposed that Val, in looking at Phil, saw himself; and that Phil in his virtuous father's face also saw his own. The son's face and character, however, had considerably the advantage over his father's. Val's presented merely what you felt you must hate, even to abhorrence; but the son's, that which you felt to be despicable besides, and yet more detestable still.

"Well," said Phil, "all I can say is, that upon my honor, my worthy father, I don't think you shine at the pathetic. Damn it, be a man, and don't snivel in that manner, just like a furious drunken woman, when she can't get at another drunken woman who is her enemy. Surely if we failed, it wasn't our faults; but I think I can console you so far as to say we did *not* fail. It's not such an easy thing to suppress scandal, especially if it happens to be a lie, as it is in the present case."

"Ah," said the father with bitterness, "it was all your fault, you ill-looking *Bubberlien*.* At your age, your grandfather would not have had to complain of want of success."

"Come, M'Clutchy—I'll not bear this—it's cursed ungenerous in you, when you know devilish well how successful I have been on the property."

"Ay," said Val, "and what was the cause of that? Was it not merely among those who were under our thumb—the poor and the struggling, who fell in consequence of your threats, and therefore through fear of us only; but when higher game and vengeful purposes were in view, see what a miserable hand you made of it. I tell you, Phil, if I were to live through a whole eternity, I could never forgive M'Loughlin the triumph that *his eye* had over me in Castle Cumber Fair. I felt that he looked through me—that he saw as clearly into my very heart, as you would of a summer day into a glass beehive. My eye quailed before him—my brow fell; but then—well—no matter; I have him *now—ho, ho, I have him now!*"

"I wonder the cars and carts are not coming before now," observed Phil, "to take away the furniture, and other valuables."

"I am surprised myself," replied Val; "they ought certainly to have been here before now. Darby got clear instructions to summon them."

"Perhaps they won't come," observed the other, "until—Gad, there's his rascally knock, at all events. Perhaps he has sent them up."

"No," said Val; "I gave him positive instructions to order them here in the first instance."

Darby now entered.

"Well, Darby," said Val, who, on account of certain misgivings, treated the embryo gaoler with more civility than usual; "what news? How many cars and carts have you got?"

Darby sat down and compressed his lips, blew out his cheeks, and after looking about the apartment for a considerable time, let out his breath gradually until the puff died away.

"What's the matter with you, Darby?" again inquired Val.

Darby went over to him, and looking seriously into his face—then suddenly laying down his hat—said, as he almost wrung his hands—

"There's a Spy, sir, on the Estate; a Popish Spy, as sure as Idolathry is rank in this benighted land."

"A Spy!" exclaimed Phil, "we know there is."

"Be quiet, Phil—who is he, Darby?"

"Why, sir, a fellow—of the name of Weasand—may Satan open a gusset in *his* own for him this day! Sure, one Counsellor Browbeater, at the Castle, sir—they say he's the Lord o' the Black Trot—Lord save us—whatever *that* is—"

"The Back Trot, Darby—go on."

"Well, sir, the Back Trot; but does that mean that he trots backwards, sir?"

"Never mind, Darby, he'll trot any way that will serve his own purposes—go on, I tell you."

"Well, sir, sure some one has wrote to this Counsellor Browbeater about him, and what do you think, but Counsellor Browbeater has wrote to Mr. Lucre, and Mr. Lucre spoke to me, so that it's all the same as if the Castle had wrote to *myself*—and axed me if I *knewn* anything about him."

"Well, what did you say?"

"Why, I said I did not, and neither did I then; but may I never die in sin, but I think I have a clue to him now."

"Well, and how is that?"

"Why, sir, as I was ordhering the tenantry in wid the cars and carts to remove M'Loughlin's furniture, I seen this Weasand along wid Father Roche, and there they were—the two o' them—goin' from house to house; whatever they said to the people I'm sure I don't know, but, any how, hell resave—hem."

"Take care, Darby," said Val, "no swearing—I fear you're but a bad convert."

"Why, blood alive, sir," replied Darby, "sure turnin' Protestant, I hope, isn't to prevent me from swearin'—don't themselves

* An ignorant, awkward booby.

swear through thick and thin? and, verily, some of the Parsons too, are as handy at it, as if they had sarved an apprenticeship to it."

"Well, but about this fellow, the Spy?"

"Why, sir, when I ordhered the cars the people laughed at me, and said they had betther autority for keepin' them, than you had for sendin' for them; and when I axed them who it was, they laughed till you'd think they'd split. I know very well it's a *Risin'* that's to be; and our throats will be cut by this blackguard spy, Weasand."

"And so you have got no cars," said Val.

"I got one," he replied, "and meetin' Lanty Gorman goin' home wid .Square Deaker's ass—King James—or Sheemus a Cocka, as he calls him—that is, "Jemmy the Cock," in regard of the great courage he showed at the Boyne—I made him promise to bring him up. Lanty, sir, says the Square's a'most gone.

"Why, is he worse?" asked Val, very coolly.

"Begad, sir, sure he thinks it's the twelfth o' July; and he was always accustomed to get a keg of the Boyne Wather, whenever that day came round, to drink the loyal toasts in; and nothing would satisfy him but that Lanty would put the cart on *Sheemus a Cocka*, and bring him a keg of it all the way from the Boyne. Lanty to plaise him, sets off wid himself to St. Patrick's Well, where they make the Stations, and filled his keg there; and the Square, I suppose, is this moment drinkin', if he's able to drink, the Glorious Memory in blessed wather, may God forgive him, or blessed punch, for it's well known that the wather of St. Patrick's Well is able to consecrate the whiskey any day, glory be to God!"

"Damn my honor, Darby," said Phil, "but that's queer talk from a Protestant, if you *are* one,"

"Och, sure aren't we all Protestant together, now?" replied Darby; "and sure, knowing that, where's the use of carryin' the matter too far? Sure, blood alive, you wouldn't have me betther than yourselves? I hope I know my station, gintlemen."

"Ah, Darby," said Phil, "you're a neat boy, I think."

"What's to be done?" asked Val; "their refusal to send their horses and cars must be owing to the influence of this priest Roche."

"Of course it is," replied the son; "I wish to God I had the hanging of him; but why did you send to those blasted papists at all? sure the blood-hounds were your men."

"Why did I, Phil? ah, my good shallow son—ha, *why* did I?" he spoke in a low condensed whisper, "why, *to sharpen my vengeance*. It was my design to have made one papist aid in the oppression of another. Go off, Darby, to Castle Cumber, and let twelve or fourteen of my own corps come to M'Loughlin's with their horses and carts immediately;—call also to M'Slime's, and desire him to meet me there forthwith; and bid Hanlon and the other two fellows to wait outside until they shall be wanted. The sheriff will be at M'Loughlin's about two o'clock."

After Darby had gone, Val paused for a while, then rose, and walked about, apparently musing and reflecting, with something of uneasiness and perplexity in his looks; whilst Phil unfolded the *True Blue*, and began to peruse its brilliant pages with his usual *nonchalance*.

"Phil," said the father, "there is one thing I regret, and it is that I promised Solomon Harman's farm. We should, or rather *you* should, you know, have secured both—for I need not tell you that two good things are better than one, and as my friend Lucre knows—who, by the way, is about to be made a bishop of, now that he of —— —— has gone to his account. Solomon, however, having been aware of the fines they offered, *ex officio*, as the Law Agent, I thought the safest thing was to let them go snacks. If, however, we could so manage, before Lord Cumber's arrival, as to get him discarded, we might contrive to secure the other farm also. The affair of the young woman, on which I rested with a good deal of confidence, would, I am inclined to think, on second consideration, rather raise him in that profligate Lord's esteem than otherwise."

"Why, did you not hear that he was publicly expelled from the congregation?" said Phil; "and as to the history of Susanna, that's all over the parish these two days. Her father brought the matter before the congregation, and so far Solomon's hypocrisy is exposed."

"In that case, then," said Val, "something may be done yet. We must only now endeavor to impress Lord Cumber with a strong sense of what is due to public opinion, which would be outraged by having such a Law Agent on his estate. Come, leave the matter to me, and we shall turn Solomon's flank yet; I know he hates me, because I curtailed his pickings, by adopting the system of not giving leases, unless to those on whom we can depend. Besides, the little scoundrel has no political opinions whatsoever, although an Orangeman."

"Come, my old cock, no hypocrisy; what political opinions have *you* got?"

"Very strong ones, Phil."

"What are they?—you hate the papists, I suppose?"

"Cursed stuff, Phil; the papists are as good as other people; but still I hate them, Phil, because it's *my interest* to do so. A man that's not an anti-papist now is nothing, and has no chance. No, Phil, I am not without a political opinion, notwithstanding, and a strong one too."

"What is it, then?"

"Here," said he, laying his hand upon his breast, "here is my political opinion. *Valentine M'Clutchy*, Phil, is *my* political creed, and my *religious* one too."

"After all," replied Phil, "you are a chip of the old block."

"Yes, Phil; but I don't parade it to the world as he does—and there's the difference."

"Well, thank heaven," said the son, "I have no brains for any creed; but I know I hate Popery and the Papists as I do the devil."

"And that, Phil, is the enlightened sentiment upon which all bigotry and mutual hatred between creeds is based. But you, Phil, could never be so vexatious as a foe to Popery as I could—your very passions and prejudices would occasionally obstruct you even in persecution—but I—I can do it coolly, clearly, and upon purely philosophical principles. I hate M'Loughlin upon *personal* principles—I hate the man, not his religion; and here there must be passion: but in matters of religion, Phil, there is nothing so powerful—so destructive—so lasting—so sharp in persecution—and so successful, as a passionless resentment. That, Phil, is the abiding and imperishable resentment of churches and creeds, which has deluged the world with human blood."

"Curse your philosophy, I don't understand it; when I hate, I hate—and I'm sure I hate Popery, and that's enough."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Solomon Suffers a Little Retribution—Requests Widow Lenehan to "Wrestle" for Him—Deaker's Death-Bed—Dies Loyally Whistling the Boyne Water.

The conversation had proceeded thus far, when Lanty Gorman, already spoken of, knocked at the door, and asked to see Mr. M'Clutchy.

Val went to the hall.

"Well, Lanty, what's the matter?—how is your master?"

"Plaise your honor," said the lad, "I think you ought to go to him; he's at the last gasp, sir; if you'd see the way his face is, and his eyes."

"He is worse, then?"

"I don't think it's so much sickness, sir, as—"

"As what?"

"As the liquor, your honor; he's at the Glorious Memory, sir, till he's nearly off; he thinks it's the Boyne wather he's drinkin' it in, sir, otherwise I don't b'lieve he'd take so much of it. *Sheemus a Cocka* and the cart's in the yard, sir; Darby said you wanted them."

"Take *Sheemus a Cocka* to h—l, sir," said Phil, "we don't want him—he's a kind of papist; take him away to h—l out of this."

"I can only take him to the gates, sir; unfortunately there's no entrance there for a papish, Captain Phil; if we could only get him to turn Protestant, sir, it's himself 'ud get the warm welcome. But," he proceeded, addressing Val, "wouldn't it be a charity, sir, to go over and see the state he's in; Tom Corbet, the butler, says its a burnin' sin and shame to look at him, widout any one near him but that vagabone, Miss Fuzzle, an' he dyin', like a dog."

"I shall be there immediately," replied Val. "Bring the ass home again; we do not want him. Now, Phil," he proceeded, "I shall ride over, to see how matters are going on; and in the meantime I think it would be well to get Hanlon, and those other two who were out with Darby for his protection—for the fellow pretends to be afraid, and carries arms—it would be as well, I say, to get two or three additional affidavits against this Easel prepared by my return; for we must make our case as firm as we can. Whether the fellow's a Popish Agent, or whether he's not, doesn't matter a curse. I don't think he is myself; but at all events it will be a strong proof in the eye of the government, that we are at least vigilant, active, and useful men. I will entrust his arrest to you, and you shall have the full credit of it at headquarters. I hope soon to have you on the Bench. Only I do beg, that for your own sake and mine, you will keep from the brandy. I have remitted the rents to Lord Cumber, who will soon make them fly."

In a few minutes afterwards he proceeded at full speed to the edifying death-bed of his father.

Whilst Phil is preparing the supplementary affidavits for Easel's arrest, which he stretched out considerably by interpolations drawn from his own imagination, we shall follow Darby to M'Slime's, observing, *en passant*, that the aforesaid Darby, as he went,

might have been perceived to grin and chuckle, and sometimes give a short, low, abrupt cackle, of a nature peculiarly gratifying to himself.

"Devil a *smite* ever either of them left on any bone thrown me," he exclaimed. "Instead o' that they begridged me the very fees that I was entitled to, bad luck to them! Well —no matther!" and here he shrugged and chuckled again, and so continued to do as he went along.

As for Solomon, he felt full occasion that morning for all his privileges and spiritual sustainment. A few days previous, he had been brought before his brother Elders by Susanna's father, whose statement was unfortunately too plain to admit of any doubt or misapprehension on the subject. These respectable men—for with but *another* exception they were so—discharged their duty as became them. The process of expulsion was gone into, but rather with a spirit of sorrow for the failings of an erring and sinful fellow-creature, than with any of the dogmatic and fiery indignation, which, under the plea of charity for his soul, is too often poured upon the head of a backslider. The fact now was that the consequences of his crime were about to come home to him, in a manner which required the exhibition of all the moral courage he possessed. It is unnecessary to inform our readers, that he had assumed the cloak of hypocrisy for the purpose of merely advancing his own interests among a certain section of the religious world. No sooner, however, did the history of his expulsion and its cause become general, than all those religious clients, who felt themselves scandalized by his conduct, immediately withdrew their business out of his hands, and transferred it to those of others; and not only persons of a decidedly religious character, but also almost every one who detested hypocrisy, and loved to see it exposed and punished. In truth, short as the period was since that exposure, Solomon was both surprised and mortified at the number of clients and friends who deserted him.

He was meditating over these things then that morning, when Widow Lenehan, of whom mention has already been made, a religious woman, and notwithstanding her name, a member of the congregation to which he belonged, entered his office, accompanied by her brother.

"Ah, Mrs. Lenehan, how do you do? and my friend Palmer, I hope I see you well!"

"Pretty well, Mr. M'Slime; as well as these hard times will let us."

"Hard times! true, my friend, hard times they are indeed; very hard—yea, even as a crushing rock to those who are severely tried. But affliction is good, my friends, and if it be for our soul's health, then, indeed, it *is* good to be afflicted."

To this, neither Mrs. Lenehan nor her brother made any reply; and Solomon was left to console himself with a holy groan or two—given in that peculiar style which hypocrisy only can accomplish, but which is altogether out of the sphere, and beyond the capacity of true repentance.

"Mr. M'Slime," said Palmer, "my sister has at present"—which was the fact—although Solomon did not believe it—"a more advantageous opportunity of investing those eight hundred pounds which the poor woman has scraped together, and she wishes to draw them out of the funds without any delay; she wishes to sell out."

"Of course," said Solomon; "and, indeed, Mrs. Lenehan, I am delighted to hear it. How are you about to have the money invested, ma'am? Only give me the names of the parties, with the nature of the securities, and I shall have the whole matter safely managed with as little delay as may be."

"She wishes first, Mr. M'Slime, to get the money into her own hands," said Palmer, "and, I believe, I may as well state that, as a conscientious Christian woman, she does not feel justified in availing herself any longer of your professional services, Mr. M'Slime."

"Indeed," observed the widow, "I don't see how I could, Mr. M'Slime; I trust I am a Christian woman, as he says, and for a Christian woman to continue *you* as her attorney, would be, I fear, to encourage hypocrisy and sin; and I feel that it would not be permitted to me to do so, unless I abuse my privileges."

"Heigho," thought Solomon, "here am I punished, as it were, in my own exact phraseology; verily, the measure is returning unto me."

"Well, Mrs. Lenehan, this is part of my individual dispensation—may it be precious to me! There is a mystery in many things, and there is a mystery in this; a mystery which, I trust, shall yet be cleared up, even so as that I shall indulge in much rejoicing when I look back upon it. Mr. Palmer, you, I trust, are a Christian man, and you, Mrs. Lenehan, a Christian woman. Now, let me ask, did you ever hear that it is possible for an innocent man to be condemned as though he were guilty? Oh! I could argue strongly on this—but that I know *now* is not the hour."

"Well, but to business, Mr. M'Slime; my sister wants the money into her own hands."

"And in her own hands it shall be placed, Mr. Palmer; but this, you are aware, cannot

be done for a few days—until, at all events, I go to Dublin."

"When will that be?" asked Palmer.

"About this day week (D. V.). Term commences on to-morrow week, but I am generally in town a day or two before.

"Very well, then, on this day week we shall be in town, too, and will call at your office about ten o'clock.

"The exact hour, my dear friend—and pray be punctual—and my friend Palmer—my *dear* friend, will you confer a great, an important favor on me? and you, Mrs. Lenehan, for you can?"

"What is it?" said Palmer.

"When at family worship think of me. If I am what the world begins to say I am, oh! do not I require, and stand in need of your prayers, and most earnest supplications—yea, Mrs. Lenehan, even that you should wrestle for me—that I may be restored to the fold:—and if I am innocent—*if*—IF—OH! why do I say *if?*" said he, turning up his eyes, and clasping his hands, whilst the tears of hypocrisy actually trickled down his cheeks, "but *it is known*—that precious word *innocence* is known? Peace be with you both!"

Darby, on his arrival, found him engaged in writing at his desk, and on casting his eye slightly at the paper he perceived that he was drawing out a bill of costs.

"Darby, my friend," said Solomon, after the first salutations were over, "when will you enter upon the duties of your new office."

"Plaise God, as soon as Mr. M'Darby leaves it—which will be in a few days, I hope; and how are you, Mr. M'Slime?"

"Tried in the furnace of affliction, nine times heated, Darby."

"It's a sad thing to be accused unjustly, Mr. M'Slime," said Darby looking him shrewdly in the face with one eye shut; "but then it's well that this—this—visitation has come upon a man that has thrue religion to support him, as you have, under it."

"Darby, my friend, there are none of us perfect—we all have our frailties—our precious little—ay! yes;—you know, Darby, the just man falleth seven times a day."

Darby started, and despite of all the influence of his new creed exclaimed—"Blessed Saints, seven times? Arra when was this, Mr. M'Slime? Troth, I think, it must be in the owld pagan times long ago, when the people were different from what they are now."

"You see, Darby, that just men, that is the Elect, have their privileges."

"Troth, if to fall seven times a day is the privilege of a just man, I'd never be anything else all my life," replied Darby; "and myself wondhers that there's e'er an unjust man alive."

"Darby, I fear that Mr. Lucre has not improved your perceptions of spiritual things."

"Why, as to that, Mr. M'Slime, if you knew Mr. Lucre's piety as well as I do—however, as you say yourself, sir, *it's known*, or rather it's unknown, the piety of that gintleman."

"Well, Darby, between you and me, I am just as well satisfied that you did not attach yourself, as I expected you would have done, to *our* congregation; for, to acknowledge a truth, Darby, which I do in all charity, I tell you, my friend, that they are awfully Pharisaical, and wretchedly deficient in a proper sense of Christian justice; I, Darby, am a proof of it. I mentioned to another person before, Darby, that the Christian devotion of an act I did, would occasion considerable risk to my own reputation, and you see it has done so. I shall bear all the blame, Darby—all shame, Darby—all *opprobrium*, Darby, sooner than that precious vessel—*hitherto* precious, I should have said—and yet, perhaps, precious still—"

"He is a just man, may be," said Darby.

"He is, I would trust—sooner, I say, than that precious vessel should be broken up as unprofitable."

"I suppose he is one of those vessels, sir," said Darby, "that don't wish to hould any wather, unless when it's mix—"

"He is, or rather was, a brother Elder, Darby; but then, it mattereth not; I have covered his trangressions with my charity. I permit you to say as much among your friends in the religious world, whenever you hear the name of Solomon M'Slime mentioned. It is also due to myself to say as much."

"I'm afther comin' from Mr. M'Clutchy's, sir," said Darby, "and he desired me to say that he hopes you'll attend at Mr. M'Loughlin's about two o'clock, and not to fail, as its to be a busy day wid him. The sheriff's to be there to put them out."

"I shall not fail, Darby," replied the attorney; "but who comes here, riding at a rapid pace, like a messenger who bringeth good tidings?"

Darby looked out, and at once recognized one of Deaker's grooms, riding at a smart gallop towards Solomon's house.

The latter raised the window as the man approached—

"Well, my friend, what is the matter?"

"Sir, Mr. Deaker wishes to see you above all things; he is just dying, and swears he cannot depart till you come."

"I shall order the car immediately,"

replied Solomon. "Say I shall not lose a moment."

The man wheeled round his horse, and galloped off at even a greater speed than before.

"Darby, my friend," said he, "I shall attend at M'Loughlin's without fail. Justice must be rendered, Darby; justice must be rendered to that wretched man and his family."

Darby looked him in the face with a peculiar expression--

"Yes, sir," said he; "plaise God, justice shall be rendhered as you say—no doubt of *that*."

He then left the house, and ere he had proceeded a score yards, turned and said—

"Yes, you netarnal villain—you know the justice you and M'Clutchy rendhered *me*—bad luck to you both, I pray, this day! Any how it'll soon come back to yez."

In a few minutes Solomon was on his way, with an anxious expectation that he had been called upon to draw up Deaker's will.

Val, on reaching his father's, heard from Tom Corbet, with a good deal of surprise, that Solomon had been sent for expressly. A glance, however, at the invalid induced him to suppose that such a message could proceed from nothing but the wild capricious impulses under which he labored. Much to his surprise also, and indeed to his mortification, he found before him two gentlemen, whom Deaker, who it appears had been conscious of his approaching dissolution, had sent for, with his usual shrewdness, to guard and preserve his loose property from his unfortunate housekeeper on the one hand, and his virtuous son Val, on the other. These gentlemen were his cousins, and indeed we are inclined to think that their presence at that precise period was, considering all things, rather seasonable than otherwise. They had not, however, arrived many minutes before Val, so that when he came, they were still in one of the parlors, waiting for Deaker's permission to see him. A little delay occurred; but the moment Val entered, with his usual privilege he proceeded straight to the sick room, whilst at the same moment a message came up to say that the other gentlemen "might come up and be d—d." The consequence was, that the three entered the room nearly together. Great was their surprise, however—at least of two of them—their disgust, their abhorrence, on seeing, as they approached his bed-room, a female—young certainly, and handsome—wrapped in a night-dress—her naked feet slippered, her face flushed and her gait tottering, escaping, as it were, out of it.

On passing them, which it was necessary she should do, she did not seem ashamed, but turned her eyes on them with an expression of maudlin resentment, that distorted her handsome but besotted features into something that was calculated to shock those who looked upon her. There she passed, a licentious homily upon an ill-spent life—upon a life of open, steady, and undeviating profligacy; there she passed the meretricious angel of his death-bed, actually chased by the presence of men from the delirious depravity of his dying pollutions!

"There is no necessity, gentlemen," said Val, "for my making an apology for this shocking sight—you all know the life, in this respect, that my unfortunate father led."*

"In any case it is unprecedented," replied one of them; "but if he be so near death, as we apprehend, it is utterly unaccountable—it is awful." They then entered.

Deaker was lying a little raised, with an Orange silk night-cap on his head, embellished with a figure of King William on horseback. Three or four Orange pocket-handkerchiefs, each, owing to the excellent taste of the designer, with a similar decoration of his Majesty in the centre, lay about the bed, and upon a little table that stood near his head. There was no apothecary's bottles visible, for it is well known that whatever may have been the cause of Deaker's death he died not of any malady known in the Pharmacopeia. In truth, he died simply of an over-wrought effort at reviving his departed energies, joined to a most loyal, but indomitable habit of drinking the Glorious Memory in brandy.

"Well, Vulture," said he on seeing Val, "do you smell the death-damp yet, that you're here? Is the putrefaction of my filthy old carcase on the wind yet? Here Lanty, you imp," he said turning his eyes on the ripe youth as he brought in a large jug of the "Boyne"—in other words of St. Patrick's Well water—"I say you—you clip, do you smell the putrefaction of my filthy old carcase yet? eh?"

"Begad, sir, it's no the pleasantest smell in the world at the present time; and there's a pair of big, black, thievish lookin' ould Ravens, sittin' for the last two or three days upon the black beech, as if they had a suspicion of something. Tom Corbet and I have fired above a dozen shots at them, and blazes to the feather we can take out o' them. So far from that, they sit there laughin' at us. Be me sowl, it's truth, gentlemen."

"Begone, sirra," said Val, "how dare you use such language as this to your master? Leave the room."

* This, like most other scenes in the present work, is no fiction.

Lanty rubbed his hair with his middle finger and went reluctantly out.

"Ah," said Deaker, "I'm glad to see you here, Dick Bredin—and you Jack—stay here till I'm in the dirt, and you'll find I have not forgotten either of you.—As for the Vulture there, he is very well able to take care of himself—he is—oh, a d—d rogue!"

Deaker's face, was such a one as, perhaps, was never witnessed on a similar occasion, if there ever were a similar occasion. It presented the cadaverous aspect of the grave, lit up into the repulsive and unnatural animation that resulted from intoxication, and the feeble expiring leer of a worse passion. There was a dead but turbid glare in his eye; half of ice, and half of fire, as it were, which when taken in connection with his past life, was perfectly dreadful and appalling. If it was not the ruling passion strong in death, it was the ruling passion struggling for a divided empire with that political Protestantism which regulated his life, but failed to control his morals.

"Here," said he, "mix me some brandy and water, or—stop, ring the bell, Dick Bredin."

Bredin rang the bell accordingly, and in a minute or so Lanty came in.

"Here, you imp, do your duty."

"Haven't you enough, sir? more, I think, will do you harm."

"Go to h—l, you young imp of perdition, do your duty, I say."

Lanty here mixed him some brandy and water, and then held it to his lips.

"Here," said he, "here is the Glorious, Pious, and Immortal Memory! hip, (hiccup) oh—ay—hip, hip, hurrah! Now, Lanty, you clip, that's one part of my duty done."

"It is, sir," replied Lanty; "you always did your duty, Square."

"Ay, but there's more to come—lay me back now, Lanty; lay me back till I whistle the Boyne Water."

Lanty accordingly laid him back a little, and he immediately commenced an attempt to whistle that celebrated air by way of consolation on his death-bed.

"He's not always settled, gentlemen," said Lanty, "and I see that one of his wandering fits is comin' on him now."

"What is the reason," said Captain Bredin—for such was the rank of the person he called Dick—"why is it that there is not a physician in attendance?"

"He would not let one of the thieves near him," replied Lanty, "for fraid they'd kill him."

"That is true," observed Val; "he always entertained a strong antipathy against them, and would consult none."

"Did Solomon M'Slime come?" he inquired.

"Here's a foot on the stairs," said Lanty, "maybe it's he—" and Lanty was right, for he had scarcely spoken when the worthy attorney entered.

"Solomon, you sleek, hypocritical rascal," said he, "I do not forget you; read that paper; you will find at the bottom of it these words, on one side, 'sworn before me, this'—no matter about the day—signed 'Randal Deaker;' and on the other, 'Susanna Barnet.' Solomon, I could not die happily without this hit at you. Your hypocrisy is known,—ha, ha, ha! Come, d—n me; I never lived a hypocrite, and I won't die one. Lanty, you imp, the brandy."

"I'll only give him a little," said the lad, looking and nodding at them.

"Come, then, 'the Glorious, Pious, and Immortal Memory!'—hip—ah, lay me down—hi-p-p-p!"

He now closed his eyes for some time, and it was observed that strange and fearful changes came over his face. Sometimes he laughed, and sometimes he groaned, and, indeed, no words could express the indescribable horror which fell upon those present, or, at least, upon most of them, as the stillness of the room was from time to time broken by the word—"*damnation*" pronounced in the low and hollow voice of approaching death.

Solomon, who had glanced at the affiliating affidavit made by Susanna, was the first to break the silence.

"In truth, my friends," said he, "I fear it is not good to be here; and were it not that I am anxious to witness what is rarely seen, a reprobate and blasphemous death-bed, I would depart even now."

After some time Deaker called out—"Help me up, Lanty; here, help me up, you whelp."

Lanty immediately did so, and aided him to sit nearly upright in the bed.

"The tumbler, Lanty—Lanty, my lad, '*let us eat, drink, and be mer—ry, for to-mor—row we die;*' here's the glor—, pio—, and immor—I, memo—, hi-p, hi-p-p! And now I swore th—at I wo—uld die whistling it, and by that oath I will." He then looked around, and seemed to recover himself a little. "Ay," he continued, "I'll do it, if I don't I'll be d——d! lay me down, you imp of hell; there, that will do."

He then gathered his mouth and lips, as those do who whistle, and at the moment a long rattle of death was heard in his throat, then a shrill, feeble sound, like that of the wind through reeds, melancholy and wailing, issued from his white and gathered lips, and then was a silence.

For some minutes it was not broken, at length M'Clutchy went over, and on looking into his face, and feeling his pulse and heart he announced the fact of his death.

"Well," said Lanty, "he kept his word, at all events; he swore many a fearful oath, that he would die whistling the Boyne Wather, and he did: but, be my soul, he didn't die drinkin' it, as he thought. I must go and let them know in the house that he's gone."

"And bring my car to the door," said Solomon, "as quickly as you can. Well," he proceeded, "the man is now gone, and, indeed, my friends, I fear that Satan is not at this moment without a companion, if he is on his way to his own dominions."

Deaker's features at that moment presented the most extraordinary appearance. As he lay, there appeared evident upon them the somewhat comic set, which was occasioned by his attempt to whistle the Boyne Water. He had but one tooth in front, which now projected a little; and as he always whistled with his mouth twisted somewhat to the one side it would be difficult to witness such a striking sight. But, when to this we add the recollection of his life and habits, and mention the fact that the very act of whistling the Boyne Water brought forward in his face all the gross characteristics of his licentious passions, we may fairly admit that the face and features very faithfully represented the life and principles of the man who owned them.

Lanty, who had gone to acquaint the servants with his death, and to get round Solomon's car, now came in with a pale face:—

"Gentlemen," said he, "as sure as life's in me, the two black thievish ravens that sot on the black beech-tree these two days past, is off; hell resave the feather o' them's there—it's truth!—The moment the breath was out of his body they made back to where they came from; they got what they wanted, you see and it stands to reason, or what 'ud keep them watchin' there these three days. As for myself, be me sowl the first thing I'll do will be to make a severe station to St. Patrick's Well to get the *grain* o' the sin off o' me that has been committed in this house."

Val, for years, knew his father's disposition too well to form any expectations whatsoever from him, and, indeed, it is but just to say that old Deaker took care not to allow him an opportunity of falling into a single misconception on the subject. As a natural consequence, Val hated him, and would have come long before to an open rupture with him, were it not that he feared to make him his enemy. He also thought it possible that Deaker, out of respect for his villany, might in some capricious moment have thought of rewarding it; and so probably he might have done, were it not for two traits in his character which his worthy father especially detested—viz., cowardice and hypocrisy.

Val, on his return home, found fewer carts than he had calculated upon even among his blood-hounds. Orangemen, in the social and civil duties of life, are sterling and excellent men in general. It is only when brought together for the discharge of political duties, by such miscreants as M'Clutchy, or when met in their Lodges under the united influence of liquor and mad prejudices; or when banded together in fairs and markets under the same stimulants, and probably provoked and dared by masses of less open and more treacherous opponents; it is only then we say that their most licentious outrages were committed. Meet the Orangeman, however, in his field, or in his house and he will aid and assist you in your struggles or difficulties, as far as he can; no matter how widely you may differ from him in creed.

The fact was that on understanding the nature of the duty Val expected from them—and which the reader may perceive was not an official one, most of them absolutely refused to come. M'Loughlin, they said, had given extensive employment, and circulated large sums of money annually in the neighborhood, and they did not see why an Absentee landlord, or his Agent, should wish to throw so many hands out of employment, and to ruin so many families. They wern't on duty now, which was a different thing; but they had their own opinions on the subject—they knew Captain Phil's conduct—and d—n them, if M'Loughlin was a Papish twenty times over, if they'd lend a hand in any sense to carry away his furniture. It was all well enough when they were drunk or on duty, but they weren't drunk or on duty now.

Three or four cars and carts were all that Val found at home on his arrival there—a circumstance which, added to his recent disappointment touching Deaker—from whom he had, in fact, to the last, cherished secret expectations—inflamed his resentment against M'Loughlin almost beyond all conception.

On leaving Constitution Cottage for M'Loughlin's, he was not a little surprised to see worthy Phil walking backward and forward on the lawn, accompanied by no less a personage than our friend Raymond-na-hattha.

"Ah," said he to Phil, looking at him and Raymond, "there's a pair of you."

"Never mind, old fellow," said Phil with

a grin, "you don't know what's ahead—a pretty bit of goods; begad, father, Raymond's a jewel:—ah, you don't know her, but I do—hip, hip, old cock."

"Phil," said Val, "you have been at the brandy; I see it in your eye, and I hear it in your speech."

"Well," said Phil, "I have, and what then—that's the chat; who's afraid, M'Clutchy?"

"Phil, Phil," said the father, "this won't do."

"I say it will do, and it must do," returned the son—"but harkee, old cock, is Deaker, the precious, d——d yet?"

"If ever man was," replied his father—"and not a penny to either of us, Phil; not as much as would jingle on his own lying tombstone, and a lying one it will be no doubt. Did you get the affidavits prepared?"

"I did, but curse the rascals, I was obliged to make them drunk before they would consent to swear them. The truth is, I put in a lot of stuff out of my own head," said Phil, "and they refused to swear to it until I made them blind."

"You must have made devilish stretches when *they* refused," said the father, "where are they now?"

"Locked up in the stable loft, fast asleep," replied Phil, "and ready to swear."

"It is well," said Val, "that we have affidavits and information enough for his arrest, independent of theirs. Go in, Phil, and keep yourself steady—Easel must be my own concern, I see that; he shall be arrested this day; I have everything prepared for it."

"Very well," said Phil; "with all my heart—I have better game in view," and he knowingly rubbed his finger along his nose as he spoke.

"If you were sober," said Val, "I could have wished you to witness the full glut of my vengeance upon M'Loughlin, inasmuch, my excellent son, as it was on your account I received the insult, the injury—why, by h——n, he trampled upon me!—that shall never be forgiven, but which will this day, Phil, meet the vengeance that has been hoarded up *here*—" and, as he spoke, he placed his hand upon his heart. "The sheriff," he added, "and his officers are there by this time—for I do assure you, Phil, I will make short work of it. As for those ungrateful scoundrels that refused to send their cars and carts, I know how to deal with them; and yet, the rascals, as matters now stand between Hartley and us, I can't afford to turn them out of the corps."

"Go ahead, I say," replied Phil; "I have better game on hands than your confounded corps, or your confounded popish M'Loughlins."

Raymond, who walked, *pari passu*, along with him, looked at him from time to time, and, as he did, it might be observed that his eyes flashed actual fire—sometimes with an appearance of terrible indignation, and sometimes with that of exultation and delight.

Val now proceeded to execute his great mission of vengeance. As he went along his heart literally beat with a sense of satanic triumph and delight; his spirit became exhilarated, and all his faculties moved in a wild tumult of delirious enjoyment. He was at best but a slow horseman, but on this occasion he dashed onward with an unconscious speed that was quite unusual to him. At length he reached M'Loughlin's, whither the carts had been sent, immediately on his return from Deaker's. All there seemed very quiet and orderly; the usual appearance of business and bustle was not of course visible, for, thanks to his own malignant ingenuity and implacable resentment, there were many families in the neighborhood not only thrown out of employment, but in a state of actual destitution. Having knocked at the hall door, it was instantly opened by one of his own retainers, and without either preface or apology he entered the parlor. There was none there but M'Loughlin himself, Gordon Harvey, the excellent fellow of whom we have already spoken, and whom M'Loughlin, in consequence of his manly and humane character, had treated with kindness and respect—and Solomon M'Slime who had arrived only a few minutes before him.

"Gentlemen," said M'Loughlin, "what have I done, that I am to thank you both for your kindness in honoring a ruined man with this unusual visit."

Val gave him a long, fixed, and triumphant look,—such a look as a savage gives his worst enemy, when he gets him beneath his knee, and brandishes his war-knife, before plunging it in his throat.

"Indeed, my good neighbor," replied Solomon, seeing that Val did not speak, "I believe it is a matter of conscience on the part of my friend M'Clutchy here, who is about to exhibit towards you and your family a just specimen of Christian retribution. In my view of the matter, however, he is merely the instrument; for I am one, Mr. M'Loughlin, who believe, that in whatever we do here, wo are only working out purposes that are shaped above."

"What! when we rob the poor, oppress the distressed, strive to blacken the char-

acter of an innocent girl, or blast the credit of an industrious man, and bring him and his to ruin? Do you mean to say, that the scoundrel"—he looked at Val as he uttered the last word—"the scoundrel who does this, and ten times more than this, is working out the purposes of God? If you do, sir," he continued, "carry your blasphemy elsewhere, for I tell you that you shall not utter it under this roof."

"This roof," said Val, "in two hours hence shall be no longer yours."

"I thought you pledged yourself solemnly that you would not take any hasty steps, in consequence of my embarrassments," said M'Loughlin; "but you see that I understand your character thoroughly. You are still the same treacherous and cowardly scoundrel that you ever were, and that you ever will be."

"This roof," replied Val, "in an hour or two shall be no longer yours. You and yours shall be this night roofless, homeless, houseless. This, Brian M'Loughlin, is the day of my vengeance and of my triumph. Out you go, sir, without consideration, without pity, without mercy—aye, mercy, for now you are *at* my mercy, and shall *not* find it."

"But my wife is ill of fever," said M'Loughlin, "and surely you are at all events an Irishman, and will not drag her from her sick bed—perhaps her bed of death?"

"That act of kindness to her would be kindness to you and your family, Mr. M'Loughlin, and for that reason she shall go out, if she were to expire on the moment. No; this is the day of my vengeance and my triumph. Harvey," he added, "tell Jack Stuart to come to me."

Harvey went out, and in a minute or two Stuart came in; a heavy-faced, sullen-looking villain, who strongly resembled Val himself in character, for he was equally cowardly and ferocious. Val met him in the hall—

"Stuart," said he, "I have sent up three or four fellows—the two Boyds and the two Carsons—to arrest a fellow named Easel—a spy, or something of that kind—with orders to lodge him in goal; go up and tell them to bring him here first. I have my reasons for it; he has taken an interest in this M'Loughlin, and I wish him to witness his punishment."

"Hadn't you betther put the rascal in the stocks, or give an ordher for it, till it's your honor's convenience to see him?"

"No, no, desire them to bring him here immediately—go now, and do not lose a moment."

On entering the parlor again, he rubbed his hands with perfect delight.

"Ay," said he, "this day, M'Loughlin, I have long looked for; *this* day, THIS day, ha, ha, ha!"

"M'Clutchy," said M'Loughlin, "I always knew you were a bad and black-hearted man; but that you were such a perfect devil I never knew till now. What, to drag out my sick wife!"

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"Consider that her removal now will occasion her death."

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"You will not do it; you *could not* do it. Would you kill her?"

"Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! M'Loughlin, this is the day of my vengeance, and my triumph. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Friend M'Clutchy," said Solomon, "permit me for one moment to remonstrate——"

"Permit the devil, sir," said Val, stamping on the floor with fury; "remonstrate! Don't you know that I have this fellow safely in my power?"

"I do," replied Solomon, "and my remonstrance would have been, had you heard me, simply and humbly to suggest that you might do the thing—this vengeance that you speak of—in an edifying manner—or, in other words, in a mild and Christian spirit."

"Solomon, you are after all but a poor devil," said Val; "a poor pitiful scoundrel, that can't understand what full, deep-seated, and lasting vengeance means. You are only fit to sneak, and peep, and skulk about after a sly, prim, sweet-faced—but I am losing my breath to speak to you. Gordon, is the inventory taken?"

"It is, sir; Montgomery has it."

"That's well, here are the carts then—ay, and here comes the sheriff. Now for business."

"So, then, you *will* proceed, Mr. M'Clutchy?" said M'Loughlin.

"Proceed," he replied, looking at him, as it were, with amazement; "proceed—ha, ha, ha!"

"Truly that is unchristian mirth," observed Solomon; "I must say as much—even although your cause be a just cause, and one supported by the laws—by our blessed laws, that protect the rights of the tenant and landlord with equal justice and impartiality; for it *is* a glorious privilege to live under a constitution that protects the tenant from the malignity and oppression of the landlord or *his agents*. It is that," said Solomon; "oh, it is that precious thing, indeed."

As he spoke the words there was a slight upraising of the eyes, together with a side glance at M'Clutchy, which, though barely perceptible, contained as much sanctified

venom as could well be expressed. He had scarcely concluded, when the sheriff, having pulled up his gig, entered.

Val, notwithstanding his excessive thirst for vengeance, could not avoid feeling the deepest possible mortification since his arrival at M'Loughlin's. There was observable in this honest fellow's bearing something that vexed his oppressor sorely, and which consisted in a kind of easy, imperturbable serenity, that no threat could disturb or ruffle. Nay, there appeared a kind of lurking good-humored defiance in his eye, which, joined to the irony of his manner, aggravated the resentment of M'Clutchy to the highest pitch.

"This is an unpleasant visit, Mr. Graham," said M'Loughlin, when that official entered; "but it can't be helped."

"It is unpleasant to both of us, I assure you," replied the sheriff; "on my part, of course, you know it is an act of duty, and, indeed, a very painful one, Mr. M'Loughlin."

"I have experienced your civility, sir, before now," returned M'Loughlin, "thanks to my friends," and he eyed M'Clutchy; "and I know you to be incapable of an ungentlemanly act. But you must feel it a distressing thing to be made, in the discharge of that duty, the unwilling instrument of oppression on the unfortunate."

"It is quite true," said the sheriff, "and the case you speak of too frequently happens, as I have reason to know."

"Pray, what are those carts for, Mr. M'Clutchy?" asked M'Loughlin.

"To remove your furniture, sir, and all your other movable property off the premises. I act in this matter by the authority of the law, and Lord Cumber's instructions."

"Dear me," said M'Loughlin, coolly, "why, you are very harsh, Mr. M'Clutchy; you might show a little forbearance, my good neighbor. Upon what authority, though, do you remove the furniture? because I did believe that the tenant was usually allowed fourteen days to pay up, before the process of an auction, and even that, you know, must take place *on* the premises, and not *off* them."

"There has been an affidavit made, that you intend to remove suddenly, that is, to make what is called a moonlight flitting, Mr. M'Loughlin, and upon that affidavit I proceed. As I said, I have the law with me, my good neighbor."

"Pray where did you pick up the honest man who was able to swear to my intentions? he surely must be a clever fellow that can make affidavit as to another man's thoughts --eh, Mr. M'Clutchy?"

Val's glances at the man, from time to time, were baleful; but, with his usual tact and plausibility, he restrained his temper before the sheriff, lest that gentleman might imagine that he had acted from any other principle than a sense of duty.

Harvey, who heard M'Clutchy's determination with deep regret, now happening to look out of the window, observed a group of persons approaching—one of the said group hard and fast in the grip of two of Val's constables; whilst, at the same time, it was quite evident, that despite the ignominy of the arrest, mirth was the predominant feeling among them, excepting only the constables. On approaching the house, they were soon known, and Val, to his manifest delight, recognized Mr. Easel as a prisoner, accompanied by Messrs. Hickman and Hartley, both of whom seemed to enjoy Easel's position between the two constables, as a very excellent subject for mirth.

"Mr. M'Clutchy," said M'Loughlin, "whether is it you or I that is about to hold a little levee in my humble parlor to-day? But I suppose I need not ask. Consider yourself at home here, my good neighbor—you are now up, and I am down; so we must only allow you to have your way."

Just then the parlor door once more opened, and the party already alluded to entered. Very distant and very polite were the salutations that passed from M'Clutchy to the party in question, which the party in question received, on the other hand, with a degree of good humor and cordiality that surprised and astounded our Agent. Val, to tell the truth, felt rather queer; for, on comparing M'Loughlin's *nonchalance* with the significant good humor of the new comers, he was too shrewd not to feel that there was a bit of mystery somewhere, but in what quarter he could not possibly guess."

"Gentlemen," said he, falling back upon his humanity, "the duties of an Agent are often painful, but still they must be discharged. Lord Cumber, I must confess, has not been well advised, to force me to these proceedings. Mr. M'Loughlin, I acknowledge I lost temper a while ago—but the fact really is, that I proceed in this matter with great reluctance, notwithstanding what I said. Here, however," he added, turning to Easel, "is a horse of a different color."

On speaking, he put his hand into his pocket, and pulling out the Hue and Cry of a certain date, read a description, and, as he advanced, he turned his eyes with singular sagacity and satisfaction upon the person and features of poor Easel.

"Browbeater was right," said he; "you are here at full length in the Hue and Cry,

—middle size—of rather plausible carriage—brown hair—hazel eyes—and a very knowing look—the upper lip a good deal curled; which I see is the case; known to be in the possession of more money that ought to belong to a person in your condition—and lastly, before you came here you were hawking high treason in the King's County, in the character of a ballad-singer and vagabond. You have expended sums of money among the poor of this neighborhod, with no good intention towards the government; and the consequence is that Whiteboyism has increased rapidly since you came amongst us."

"But on what authority do you arrest me now?"

"I might arrest you at any time on suspicion; but here are affidavits, in which it is sworn that you are believed to be a popish spy and treasonable agent; and besides I have instructions from the Castle to take you."

"But what am I to do?" asked Easel,—"I am a stranger, and known here by nobody. This, certainly, is not a very Irish reception, I must say, nor is it very creditable to the hospitality of the country. You were civil enough to me when you expected me to become an Orangeman."

"Ah," replied Val, "that's a proof of your ability; you overreached me then, which is what few could have done. No—none but a master-hand like you could do it. Mr. M'Loughlin," he proceeded, "would you allow me a separate room for a few minutes? I am anxious to put some questions to this mischievous vagabond, privately."

"With all my heart," replied the other; "go into the dining-room."

"Now, you scoundrel," said Val, "that you may labor under no mistake, I think it fair to tell you that Browbeater and I know everything about you, and all the Protean shapes you have gone through for the last three years, in different parts of the kingdom Now listen to me, you d——d impostor; listen to me, I say—you have it in your power to become a useful man to the present government. They have revived the Spy system, and there is no doubt, from your acquaintance with the designs and proceedings of Whiteboyism, and of Popery in general, that you can afford very important information on the subject; if you can, your bread is baked for life. You know not the large, the incredible large staff of Spies that we have at work, and believe me, when I tell you that if you make the proper disclosures *to me* I shall recommend you in the strongest terms to Browbeater, who will have you placed high upon the list of informers—a respectable class of men, let me tell you, and extremely *useful*—so that you will be well and liberally paid for your treachery, I mean that treachery which has *amor patriæ* to justify it. We will not attempt to control your genius in any way; you can take to ballad-singing again, if you like, or any other patriotic line of serving the government which you choose. Having premised me this much, allow me now to ask you your real name."

"For the present I must decline answering that question."

"Very proper—I see you know your business: and it is not my wish that you should say anything to criminate yourself—certainly not. But in the meantime, that you may see I am not at all in the dark, I tell you that your name is Larry O'Trap, a decent journeyman carpenter by trade, but as much a painter as I am a parson."

"I won't submit to a private examination," replied Easel; "examine me publicly—that is, before the gentlemen in the next room, and I will answer you to better purpose, perhaps; but I hate this hole and corner work."

"You will give no information, then?"

"I don't exactly say that—it is probable I may."

"Think of it, then," said Val, "and let me tell you, there is little time to be lost. I shall speak to you once again before I commit you—that is, after I shall have punished this villain M'Loughlin, whom I hate as I hate hell; and mark me, you scoundrel, and reflect on this,—I am a man who never yet forgave an injury; therefore don't make *me* your enemy. This M'Loughlin insulted me some years ago in Castle Cumber, and it is *that* insult that I am this day revenging upon his head—so think of my words."

"I shall think of them; I shall never forget them."

"Keep this fellow in close custody," said Val to the constables, as they re-entered the parlor—"until the business of the day is over. Mr. Sheriff, it is time now that you should do your duty."

"I countermand that order," said Easel.

"You see, Mr. M'Clutchy," said the sheriff, smiling, "that here is a countermand."

"Here is your rent in full, Mr. M'Clutchy," said M'Loughlin, "and lest notes might not prove satisfactory, as they never do to *you*, there it is in gold. You will find it right."

"Well, really I am glad of this," said Val, "it would have been painful to me to have gone to extremities. Still there is the Ejectment to take place, as the leases have expired: but that, my good neighbor, will be merely a form. Of course you will be permitted to go in again as caretakers; but in the meantime we must get the furniture out, and re-

ceive possession in the proper way. I was angry, Mr. M'Loughlin, a while ago, as I said, and spoke hastily—for indeed I am rather warm when promoting Lord Cumber's interests; God forgive him in the meantime, for the disagreeable duties he too frequently puts to me—duties for which *I* am certain to incur the censure."

"I countermand the order," repeated Easel, with a singular smile on his face; "and I desire you, Mr. M'Loughlin, to withhold your rent."

"You!" exclaimed Val, looking at him.

"Yes, *I*," he replied, walking over, and looking him sternly in the face.

"If it were worth while to ask your name, I would—but I believe I know it already."

"Perhaps not."

"Well, perhaps not; and pray what may it be?"

"I will tell you, sir," replied Hartley. "This gentleman is—"

"Larry O'Trap, a Spy and Whiteboy Agent," said Val, looking into the Hue and Cry, and again surveying Easel. "He is imposing on you, Mr. Hartley."

"This gentleman, sir," proceeded Hartley, "is the Honorable Richard Topertoe, brother to the Right Honorable Lord Cumber—"

"And who has the honor to present you with this communication from that nobleman," said Mr. Topertoe, "which contains your Dismissal from his Agency; and this to you, Mr. M'Slime, which also contains *your* Dismissal as his Law Agent. The authority of each of you from this moment ceases; and yours, my sterling, excellent, and honorable friend, from this moment recommences," said he, turning to Mr. Hickman. "This letter contains your re-appointment to the situation which you so honorably scorned to hold, when you found it necessary, as his Agent, to oppress the people. Will you be good enough, Mr. M'Loughlin, to call in Mr. Harman and those other people? You shall not be left in the dark, sir," he proceeded, "as to the extent of our knowledge of your dishonesty, treachery, and persecution."

"Truly, my friend M'Clutchy, it is our duty now to act a Christian part here. This dispensation may be ultimately for our good, if we receive it in a proper spirit. May He grant it!"

M'Clutchy's face became the color of lead on perusing his dismissal, which was brief, stern, and peremptory—or as the phrase goes—short, sharp, and decisive. It was written by Lord Cumber's own hand, and to give it all due authenticity, had his seal formally attached at the bottom.

Harman now entered, accompanied by Darby, Poll Doolin, and a number of those persons among the tenantry, whom M'Clutchy had robbed and persecuted. On looking at them, after having twice perused the letter of dismissal, his hands and knees trembled as if he were about to fall, and on attempting to fold the letter, it was visible to all that he could scarcely accomplish it.

"Now," proceeded Mr. Topertoe, "I may as well inform you that I have made myself thoroughly and most intimately acquainted with your conduct in all its revolting phases; I have read and transmitted to my brother two letters which passed between you and this pious gentleman, Mr. M'Slime, here, upon the subject of Messrs. M'Loughlin and Harman's property—than which, nothing more flagitious could—in the way of business, or in the performance of any public duty—enter the heart of man. Just Heaven! a poor creature, perhaps prompted by the cravings of hunger, will steal some paltry matter, not worth half a crown—perhaps a pocket-handkerchief — and forthwith out comes justice, oh, not Justice, but *Law* in her stead, with sword in hand, and scales most iniquitously balanced; and, lo! the unfortunate wretch is immediately dragged to a prison, and transported for life to a penal colony; whilst at the same time, rapacious villains like you, will plunder by wholesale—will wring the hearts of the poor, first by your tyranny, and afterwards rob them in their very destitution. The unhappy, struggling widow, without a husband to defend her, you would oppress, because she is helpless, and your scoundrel son would corrupt her, were she not virtuous. You would intoxicate an aged man that he might, in the unguarded moments of inebriety, surrender a valuable lease into your keeping. You would not receive your rents, except in gold, for which you made the wretched people pay a ruinous, murderous premium, by selling it out to them from day to day. You—in fact I have now neither time nor patience to enumerate your monstrous corruptions and robberies, although *I know them all*, as you shall find ere long. There is one act, however, so refined in diabolical depravity, so deeply marked by a spirit of cowardice, revenge, and cruelty, that I might almost question whether, in the lowest depths of hell itself, anything so damnably black and satanic could originate—I allude to the plan which you conceived and got executed by your heartless, cowardly son, aided by that old woman who stands there in your presence, for ruining the stainless reputation of Mr. M'Loughlin's only daughter."

"I can prove that," said Poll, "and here I am ready and willing to do so."

"In this, however, thank God, you have failed," he continued, "yes, in this, and every other act of your villainy you have been detected, and shall be exposed and punished before the proper tribunal. It is you, sir, and such scourges of the poor and industrious classes as you, who goad the unhappy, the destitute, and despairing people into crimes that are disgraceful to the country; it is you, and such as you, who force them, maddened by your cruelty and oppression, to fall back upon revenge, when they cannot find redress or justice in the laws of the land. Unhappily the whole kingdom is studded too thickly with such men, and until property in this unfortunate country is placed upon an equal footing between landlord and tenant—until the rights and privileges of him who farms and cultivates the soil, are as well protected and secured by law as are those of the other party, so long will there be bloodshed and crime. The murderer is justly abhorred, apprehended, and punished as he ought in the sight of God and man to be: but is there no law to reach unprincipled wretches like you, whose grinding rapacity, dishonesty, and inhumanity, furnish him with the motives and incentives to the crime he commits? As for you, gentlemen, and honest men as you are," he proceeded, addressing M'Loughlin and Harman, "you remain, of course, in your farms; you shall have reasonable and fair leases, and, what is more, your credit shall be re-established on as firm a footing as ever. You shall be enabled to resume your business on an ample scale, and that as sure as I am master of two hundred thousand pounds. And now, O'Drive, a word with you:—I have fully discovered your treachery to both M'Clutchy and M'Slime; you were a willing agent in carrying out their hard and heartless excesses. You were, in truth, *a thorough bailiff*, without conscience, feeling, or remorse. In no instance have you ever been known to plead for, or take the part of a poor man; so far from that, I find that you have invited and solicited their confidence, only—in case they did not satisfy your petty extortions—that you might betray them to your relentless employer, whilst, under all possible circumstances you fleeced them by threats, and acted the vampire on a small scale. You are no longer a bailiff on this estate, and I have the further satisfaction to assure you, that in consequence of a private interview I had with the new bishop, the Right Rev. Dr. Lucre, concerning your appointment to the situation of under goaler of Castle Cumber, I have succeeded in getting it cancelled; so that you are at liberty to carry your low knavery to the best market you can get for it. In all this, I am authorized by my brother, who, I trust, will soon see the erroneous notions which he entertains upon the subject of property, and his duties as landlord. You, my dear friend, Mr. Hickman—my friend, I say with pride, and the friend of the poor with still greater pride—you will have the goodness to receive from Mr. M'Clutchy and M'Slime all books and documents pertaining to the estate, that are in their possession."

"Well, be my sowl," said Darby, who was the first to break the silence that followed these observations; "if you were Lord Cumber himself, instead of his brother, I'd call that same tratement of *me* as purty a piece of ingratitude as ever came acrass me;—me that gave you most of the information—that sould them both, I may say—an' the letthers too that convicted them, are they forgotten?"

"There is your friend and kindred spirit, Mr. M'Clutchy," replied Mr. Topertoe, "who, only that he never forgives an injury, might get you a secret appointment among the Castle Spies and Informers, with whom, or rather it would appear, with the gentleman who drills them, he has considerable influence. It is for such a respectable corps that your talents are best adapted."

"Of a truth," said Solomon, "this is a turning of the tables, to use a somewhat vulgar adage. As for me, I know it is good to be purified in the furnace, and scourged with many stripes, as it is a fresh proof that I am cared for."

Up until this moment M'Clutchy had not uttered a single syllable, but, as we have said, he trembled very much, his temples throbbed, and his brow fell. The squint in his left eye became deeper and more guilt-like. The revulsion of feeling, coming upon him so unexpectedly as it did, was dreadful, and the tumult within him quite beyond the power of language to describe.

He merely said, and this with parched lips and slow enunciation—

"Very well, Mr. Topertoe; your wishes touching the giving up of all documents connected with the property shall be duly complied with, as far as *I* am concerned. That is all I choose to say just now."

"And so far as I am concerned," said Solomon, "I can say that mine also shall be rendered up with rejoicing—with rejoicing that I have no further intercourse with a profligate and most unchristian landlord. I feel that in this thing I have cause to be rather thankful than otherwise."

"Now, M'Clutchy," said M'Loughlin, "I could overlook all your dishonesty and treacherous misrepresentation of me to Lord Cumber—your attempt to oust us out of our

farms, and to put your son and M'Slime in our places—your suppressing the fact, besides that we offered a thousand pounds apiece for a renewal—your whispering away our commercial reputation, and thereby bringing us in the end to ruin—all that, I say, I could overlook and forgive; but for your foul and cowardly attempt to destroy the fair fame of our spotless child—for that, sir, in which, thank heaven, you failed, I now say, I trust, with honest pride, and tell you face to face—if you had only the manliness to look in mine—that I feel this to be the hour of *my* triumph—but not of my *vengeance*, for I trust I am a Christian man."

"As for me, M'Clutchy," said Harman, "really, on looking over your whole conduct—into which there comes not one single virtue belonging to our better nature—I am so filled with indignation, and a perception of the baseness and blackness of your heart and character, your revenge, your perfidy, and above all, your cowardice, that I can feel nothing for you but a loathing and abhorrence that really sicken me when I think of you."

"What could you expect," observed Poll Doolin, "from the son of Kate Clank and villainous ould Deaker?"

M'Clutchy never raised his eye, but taking up his hat, he and Solomon, followed soon after by Darby, took their departure in silence; Solomon occasionally shrugging his shoulders and throwing up his eyes, like a persecuted man.

"There is now no further use for preserving my incognito," observed Mr. Topertoe, "and as you, Mr. Sheriff, have had your journey for nothing, I shall feel obliged if you will join these gentlemen at the Castle Cumber Arms to dinner, where we can have an opportunity of talking these and other matters over more at our leisure."

"Do not expect *me*, sir," said Hartley, who felt that the delicacy of his position with regard to Lord Cumber, rendered it altogether impossible that he could be the guest of a man with whose brother he was likely soon to fight a duel.

"Well," replied Topertoe, "if you cannot come I shall regret it."

"It is really out of my power, I assure you," replied Hartley, as he bade him farewell.

The sheriff accepted the invitation; and after shaking hands with, and congratulating Messrs. M'Loughlin and Harman, also took his leave. He had scarcely gone, when a magnificent carriage and four dashed up to the door, in which Topertoe, accompanied by Hickman, took his seat, and again drove off towards Castle Cumber, where the said carriage only had arrived that morning from the metropolis.

Darby was certainly confounded by the unwelcome intelligence respecting the loss of the Gaolership, which was conveyed to him in such an unpleasant manner by Mr. Topertoe. He knew his own powers of wheedling, however, too well, to despair of being able, could he see Lucre, to replace himself as firmly as ever in his good opinion. With this purpose in view, he wended his way to the Glebe House, where he understood the newly made bishop yet was, having made arrangements to proceed the next morning to Dublin, in order to be consecrated. There was, therefore, no time to be lost, and he accordingly resolved to effect an interview if he could. On arriving, the servant, who was ignorant of the change against him which had been produced in his master's sentiments, instantly admitted him; and the bishop, who had expected a present of game from his neighbor, Lord Mountmortgage, desired him to be admitted—the servant having only intimated that "the man was come."

"How is this?" said the Prelate in a loud and angry voice; "how did you get in, sir?"

"Plaise your Lordship," replied Darby, "I came in by the door, of course—an' that, your Lordship, is generally the right way; for as holy Scripture says," he proceeded, anxious to let his Lordship see how deeply he was imbued with Scriptural truth—"as holy Scripture says, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber,' Indeed, my Lord, I never *knewn* the consolation that's in Scripture antil lately, glory be to God!"

The bishop looked at him with an angry and scrutinizing eye; for Darby's deportment, to say truth, puzzled him very much. Whether his conduct proceeded from audacity, or shear simplicity, he felt unable to determine, from anything that he could see in Darby's imperturbable features.

"What is your business with me now?" asked the prelate.

"Why, your Lordship," replied Darby, "I've made out a couple of proserlytes, that will be a credit to our blessed Establishment, as soon as they're convarted. One of them, my Lord, is called Barney Butther, an' the other Tom Whiskey, in regard of—"

"Go about your business, sir," replied the prelate, reddening with indignation; "begone."

"I will, my Lord; only, my Lord, just before I go—about the Undher Gaolership?"

"Your appointment to it is cancelled," replied the other, "for many reasons; you avoided prosecuting that wild priest."

"But sure I said, my Lord, that when I'd get into my situation—"

"Your appointment to it is cancelled, I repeat; the fact is, O'Drive, I have too much regard for your morals and the advances you have recently made in scriptural knowledge to place you in such a situation. It is only some hardened sinner, some irreclaimable knave, and not an honest man like you, that ought to be appointed to such an office; the nature of its duties would only draw you into bad habits and corrupt your principles. The fact is, your very virtues and good qualities prevent you from getting it—for get it, you assuredly *shall not.*"

"Is that your last determination, my Lord?"

"My last respecting that matter," replied the prelate.

"Then, upon my conscience," returned Darby, "according to that rule, hell resave the ha'porth of the kind there was to prevent you from bein' a bishop. I hear you're goin' up to Dublin to be consecrated, and be me sowl, you want it; but I'd take my book oath that all the grace in your church won't be able to consecrate you into thrue religion. The back o' my hand to you, I say; for I hate everything that is ungrateful."

It often happens that a petty insult, coming from an unexpected source, excites our indignation more than an offence from a higher quarter. The new made prelate actually got black in the face, and giddy in the head, with the furious fit of passion which seized him on hearing this language from Darby.

In the meantime, we leave him to cool as best he can, and follow Darby to Castle Cumber, where he thought it probable he might meet Father M'Cabe; nor was he mistaken. He found that very zealous gentleman superintending the erection of a new chapel on a site given to Father Roche by Mr Hartley. The priest, who knew that the other had recently avoided him, felt considerably surprised at seeing the bailiff approach him of his own free will.

"Well," said he, in a voice which contained equal parts of irony and anger, "what do you want with me, Mr. Protestant? Ah, what a blessed Protestant you are! and what a hawl they made when they caught you! What do you want, you shuffling scoundrel?"

"Troth, the grace o' God, I fear," replied Darby, humbly.

"And what brings you to me then? I mean, sirra, what's your business now?"

"Why, sir, devil a one o' me but's come back to the ould creed. Troth, your Reverence, the impressions you made on me the day we had the great argument, was wondherful. Be my sowl, it's yourself that can send home the whi—word, your Reverence, in a way that it won't *aisly* be forgotten. How-an-iver, sure hell resave the one o' me, but *threwn* back his dirty religion to Lucre—an' left him an' it—although he offered, if I'd remain wid them, to put Johnny Short out, and make me full gaoler. 'My Lord,' says I, 'thruth's best. I've heard both sides o' the argument from you and Father M'Cabe; an' be me sowl, if you were a bishop ten times over, you couldn't hould a candle to him at arguin' Scripture; neither are you the mild and forgiving Christian that he is. Sure I know your church well,' says I up to him. 'It's a fat church, no doubt; an' I'll tell you what's in it.'"

"'What's that, you backslidin' vagabone?'" says he.

"'Why, then, plenty of mait,' says I, 'but no salvation;' an' salvation to me, your Reverence, but he got black over the whole face and chullers wid rank passion. But sure—would your Reverence come a little more this way; I think the men's listenin' to us—but sure," continued Darby, in a low, wheedling, confidential, and friendly voice, "sure, sir, he wanted me to prosecute you for the religious instruction—for trath it was nothing else, glory be to God—that you gave me the day of the argument; an'—now listen, your Reverence—he offered me a bribe if I'd do it."

"What bribe!"

"Why, sir, he put his hand under his apron—sure he has a black silk apron on him now, jist for all the world like a big man cook, dressed out in murnin'—he put his hand undher his apron, and wid a hitch got it into his breeches pocket—'here's a fifty pound note for you,' says he, 'if you'll prosecute that wild priest—there's no end to his larnin,' says he, 'and I want to punish him for it; so, Darby, here's a fifty pound note, an' it'll be yours when the prosecution's over; and I'll bear all the expenses besides.'"

"And what did you say to that?" asked the priest.

"Troth," replied Darby, "I jist bid him considher his fifty pound note as waste paper—an' that was my answer."

"And there's mine, you lying, hypocritical scoundrel," said the priest, laying his whip across the worthy bailiff's shoulders; "you have been for thirty years in the parish, and no human being ever knew you to go to your duty—you have been a scourge

on the poor—you have maligned and betrayed those who placed confidence in you—and the truth is, not a word ever comes out of your lips can be believed or trusted; when you have the marks of repentance and truth about you, I may listen to you, but not until then—begone!"

"Is that your last determination?" said Darby.

"No doubt of it," replied the priest; "my last, and I'll stick to it till I see you a different scoundrel from what you are."

"Ay," replied Darby; "then, upon my sowl, you're all of a kidney—all jack fellow like—an' divil rasave the dacent creed among you, barrin' the Quakers, and may heaven have a hand in me, but I think I was born to be a Quaker, or, any way, a Methodist. I wish to God I understood praichin'—at aitin' the bacon and fowl I am as good a Methodist as any of them—but, be me sowl, as I don't understand praichin', I'll stick to the Quakers, for when a man praiches there, all he has to do is to say nothing." Having uttered these sentiments in a kind of soliloquy, Darby, after having given the priest a very significant look, took his departure.

"Well," said he to himself, "if the Quakers, bad luck to them, won't take me, I know what I'll do—upon my conscience, I'll set up a new religion for myself, and sure I have as good a right to bring out a new religion myself, as many that done so. Who knows but I may have a congregation of my own yet, and troth it may aisily be as respectable as some o' them.* But sure I can't be at a loss, for, plaise God, if all fails, I can go to Oxford, where I'm tould there's a manifactory of new religions—the Lord be praised for it!"

On returning home, Val was observed to be silent and morose. The dashing speed of his ride to M'Loughlin's was not usual to him, for his motions were generally slow; it was significant, however, of the greedy spirit which stimulated him to the long wished for glut of his revenge. Not so his return. He walked his horse as if he had been a philosopher on horseback; and when Phil (now quite tipsy), who expected to see him return with all the savage triumph of vengeance in his looks, saw that he was dumb, spiritless and absolutely crestfallen, and who also observed the symptoms we spoke of, he began naturally enough to suspect that something had gone wrong. His interrogations, however, were fruitless. Val, on his inquiring the cause of these appearances, told him in a petulant fit of that ill-temper which is pecular to cowards, "to go be hanged;" a compliment which dutiful Phil returned to his worthy father with interest. This was all that passed between them, with the single exception of an observation which fell from Phil's lips as he left the dinner-table, late in the evening.

"I tell you what, M'Clutchy, you're a confounded ill-tempered old scoundrel, an-and wha-what's more—o-o-over to your disgrace, a d——d bad, rotten, and unsound Protestant. How do you ex-expect, sir, that a Protestant Establishment can be sup-support-ported in this country by such scandalous con-conduct as this? hip, hip, hurra! Instead of-of being an ex-example to your son, it is your-your son, M'Clutchy, that is an example to you, hip, hip, hur—, and so good night to you, I'm—I'm on for a neat bit of business—that's all. Go to bed, you old dog."

* Darby had better success in his speculations than perhaps he ever expected to have. We need not inform the generality of our readers that the sect called Darbyites were founded by him, and have been called after him to the present day, sometimes Darbyites, and sometimes Drivers.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Mountain Grave-Yard—Dreams of a Broken Heart—The Christian Pastor at his Duty—Melancholy Meeting between a Mother and her Son—A Death-Bed that the Great might envy—Phil experiences a Specimen of the Pressure from without—Retribution—The Death of Valentine M'Clutchy.

It was now about seven o'clock in the evening; and up from the moment of Val's return, he had scarcely spoken half a dozen words. As Phil was leaving the room, however, the father called after him:—

"Phil," said he, "come here for a minute."

"Well," said Phil, staggering back, "what's in the wind now?"

"Phil," continued the father, "which of all the blood-hounds is the greatest and most remorseless villain?"

"A d——d ni-nice point to decide, when they're on-on duty," replied Phil.

"*If he escapes me*—" said Val in a soliloquy;—"but no matter," he added, speaking aloud; "I'm a fool for putting such a question to you. Go to bed, and sleep yourself sober."

Phil staggered out of the room in a very musical mood, slamming the door after him with a force that made the house shake. He had not gone a hundred yards from the hall door when Raymond appeared in the distance, beckoning him forward; a signal for which he was looking out with that kind of drunken eagerness which is incapable of forethought, or any calculation whatsoever that

might aid in checking the gross and onward impulses of blind and savage appetite. Phil's instinctive cowardice, however, did not abandon him. In the course of the day he primed and loaded his pistols, in order to be prepared against any of those contingencies which the fears of pusillanimous men never fail to create. On meeting with Raymond, who had been waiting for him outside, at a place previously agreed on between them, he pulled out the fire-arms, and showed them to the fool, with a swaggering air, which, despite his intoxication, sorely belied what he felt. They then proceeded together by the mountain path, the moon occasionally showing herself by glimpses—for the night, although cloudy, was not dark, but on the contrary, when the clouds passed away, she almost might be said to flash out with singular brilliancy.

We now leave them on their way to the place of appointment, as it had been arranged by Raymond, and beg our readers to accompany us to the church-yard in the mountains, where all that were dear and so devotedly beloved by poor Mary O'Regan slept. This unhappy woman, though closely watched by her friends and neighbors, always contrived, with the ingenuity peculiar to maniacs and insane persons, to escape from time to time from under their surveillance, and make her way to the spot, which, despite the aberrations of reason and intellect, maintained all its sacred and most tender influences over her pure and noble heart. For some time past, moved probably by some unconscious impression of the pastoral attention and kindness of the amiable Father Roche, she had made his house her home; and indeed nothing could exceed the assiduity and care with which she was there watched and tended. Everything that could be done for her was done; but all sympathy and humanity on their part came too late. Week after week her strength wasted away, in a manner that was painfully perceptible to those who felt an interest in her. Her son Ned was still in the country, but had no fixed residence, and merely remained for the purpose of seeing her freed from all her miseries, and laid in her last unbroken sleep beside those whom she had loved so well. On the evening in question, she appeared to be so feeble and exhausted, that the good priest's family did not for a moment imagine that any particular vigilance was necessary. Between six and seven o'clock, then, she had performed the last of those pilgrimages of the heart which time after time had been made by her to the solitary church-yard in the mountains—containing, as it did, the only humble shrine from whence her bruised and broken spirit could draw that ideal happiness, of which God in His mercy had not bereft her.

On arriving at the old ruin, she felt so completely enfeebled, that a little rest was absolutely necessary previous to her reaching the graves she came to visit, although they were only a few yards distant from the spot which afforded the poor creature the requisite shelter while recruiting her exhausted powers. At length she arose, and having tottered over to the graves, she sat down, and clasping her hands about her knees, she rocked her body to and fro, as Irish women do when under the influence of strong grief. She then chaunted a verse or two of an old song, whose melancholy notes were not out of keeping with either the scene or the hour; nor an unsuitable burthen for the wild night breeze which wailed through the adjoining ruins in tones that might almost be supposed to proceed from the spirit of death itself, as it kept its lonely watch over those who lay beneath.

"I wonder," said she, "that they do not speak to me before this, for they know I'm here. Ah," she proceeded, "there's his voice!—my white-haired Brian's voice! what is it, darling? I'm listenin'!

"'Come, mother, come,' he says, 'we are waitin'!'

"Is it for me, *a lanna dhas oge?*

"'Yes,' he says, 'for you, mother dear, for you!'

"Well, Brian darlin', I'll come.

"'Yes, come,' he says, 'for we are waitin'!'

"And," she proceeded, "who is this again? ah, sure I needn't ax; Torley, my heart, I'm here!

"'Come, mother dear,' he says, 'for we are waitin'!'

"Is it for me, my manly son?

"'Yes,' he says, 'for you, mother—mother dear, for you?'

"Well, Torley darlin', I'll come.

"'Yes, come,' he says, 'for we are waitin'?'

"Ah," she proceeded, "here is my own Hugh, my brave husband, that I fought for, what does *he* say? Whisht!

"'Come, Mary dear—come, the distracted, the lovin,' but the heart-broken—come to us, my fair-haired Mary, for we are waitin'; our hearts love you *even in heaven*, and long for you to be with us.'

"Husband of my heart, I will come; and *here* sure *I* feel as you all do in heaven—for there is one thing that nothing can kill, and will never die, that is the light that's in a lovin' wife's heart—the light that shines in a mother's love—Hugh, asthore machree, I'll come, for sure I'm jist ready.

"You are not sick now, Brian," she proceeded; "it isn't the cowld pratee, and the black sickenin' bog water you have *there!*

"'No, mother dear,' he says, 'but we want *you;* oh, don't stay away from us, for our hearts long for you.'

"I will come, avillish—sure I'm jist ready. Torley," she proceeded, sustaining a dialogue that proceeded, as it were, out of the accumulated affection of a heart whose tenderness shed its light where that of reason failed,—"Torley, my manly son, your young cheek is not pale *now,* nor your eye dim—you don't fear the hard-hearted Agent, nor his blood-hounds, nor the cowld and bitther storm that beat upon your poor head, an' you dyin'—you don't fear them now, my brave boy—you neither feel nor fear any of these things now, Torley, my son!

"'No mother,' he says 'all we want now is to have you wid us. Our hearts long for you, and why do you stay away from us?—Oh! come mother dear, for we're waitin'!'

"Torley, my manly son, I'll come, for I'm jist ready.

"Hugh, husband of my heart, you're not now lyin' sick upon the damp cowld straw, as you war in the cabin on the mountains—your head has no pain now, avick machree—nor is your heart low and sorrowful wid your own illness and our want.—The voices of the Dashers, or Blood-hounds, aren't now in your ears, nor need you be afraid that they will disturb your bed of death—an' distract your poor sowl wid their blasphemin', when you ought to think of God's mercy.—Oh! no, avillish, sure you feel none of that now, Hugh dear?

"'Oh, no,' he says, 'nothing of that do we *feel* now—nothing of that do we *fear.* But, come, Mary, oh, come, come to us—and we think the time long till we see you again.'"

These affecting dialogues, or rather "dreams of a broken heart," were literally nothing else than the mere echoes of her own affection; for it was obvious that the love she felt for her husband and children, unconscious as she then was of it, gave form to the sentiments which her excited imagination had clothed in language that was so highly figurative. For some time she was silent, or muttered to herself such fragments of unconnected language as rose to her fancy—and ultimately laid down her head upon the little grassy mound which constituted their graves. Here she had not lain long, when, overcome by the fatigue of the journey, she closed her eyes, and despite the chilliness of a biting night, sank into an unbroken slumber.

Sleep on, poor sufferer—and let those whose crimes have placed thy distracted head upon that cold and unnatural pillow, reflect that they have a judge to meet, who will, in another life, not overlook the deeds done in this. Who is there who would, even in this thy most pitiable destitution, exchange thy innocent, but suffering spirit, for M'Clutchy's heart, or the dark crimes which it festers.

At length she awoke, but whether it was that the keen and piercing air had cooled the pulsation of her beating brain, or that the restoration to reason, which is called, when applied to the insane—a lightening before death—had taken place, it is impossible to say with anything like certainty. At all events, on awakening, the first sensations she experienced were those of surprise and wonder, and immediately did she feel her mind filled with a train of shocking and fearful reminiscences. Her physical sufferings were also great. She felt benumbed and chilled; her heart was cold, and a shivering sickness ran through her whole frame, with a deadly presage of approaching dissolution. She looked up to the sky, then round her at the graves, and in a moment recognized the burying-place of her husband and children. All the circumstances then connected with the Extermination scene at Drum Dhu, and that of the treble death in the mountains, rushed upon her recollection with a force at once vivid and powerful.

"Father of heaven,"* she exclaimed, "I have been driven out of my raison by too much sorrow, and here I am restored to it on the very graves where those that I love sleep!"

She then endeavored to rise, but found on making the attempt, that she had not strength for it. The consciousness of this filled her heart with woe almost unutterable.

"Merciful father," she again exclaimed, "do not—oh, do not suffer me to die on this wild mountain side, far from the face or voice of a human being! There is nothing too powerful for your hand, or beyond your strength or your mercy, to them that put their humble trust in you. Save me, oh, God, from this frightful and lonely death, and do not let me perish here without the consolations of religion! But if it's thy blessed and holy will to let me do so, then it is my duty to submit! Give me strength, then, to bow to thy will, and to receive with faith and thanksgivin' whatever you choose to bestow upon me! And above all things, O Lord, grant me a repentant heart, and that my bleak and lonely death-bed may have the light of glory upon it! Grant me

* The reader is to remember, that she is supposed to give utterance to all her feelings and sentiments in the Irish language.

this, O God, and I will die happy even here; for where your blessed presence is there can be nothing wantin'."

Her piety and faith in the mercy of God were not without their own reward. The last words were scarcely uttered, when Father Roche, accompanied by her son Ned, advanced to the grave on which she sat. He had been absent on a sick call, and would not have been aware of her escape to the mountains, were it not for her son, who, having met him on his return, requested permission to see her, only for a few minutes, if not too late. The priest granted him so reasonable a request, and it was on seeking for her that the discovery of her absence took place, the rest of the family having been of opinion that she had gone to bed in the early part of the evening, as was mostly her habit. The priest suspected, from her weak state of health and shattered constitution, that such a journey would probably prove fatal, and with his usual discrimination he calculated upon the restoration to reason which actually occurred.

"In that case," said he, "the administration of the last rites will console her on her bed of death, and God forbid that she should depart without them. It is my duty that she shall not."

"Poor woman!" said he, as they approached her, "this chilly night will be a severe trial upon her."

"What wouldn't I give, my dear mother, —oh, what wouldn't I give," said Ned, tenderly taking her hand, "to see your senses restored to you!"

"Thank the Almighty, then!" she returned feebly—"what!—my darling son Ned! and Father Roche! Oh, was I not right in sayin' that there is nothing too powerful for God's strength and love?" she exclaimed; she then kissed her son, who burst into tears, and tenderly embraced her.

"See how unexpectedly He can surround even this cowld death-bed with his mercy."

"Don't say a death-bed, my dear mother, for now that the blight of raison has left you, I hope you'll get new strength."

"I will," she replied, with a feeble but mournful smile, "I will Ned; but it'll be in heaven with them I love, and that love me. My dear Ned, all my cares are now over—all my affections past—I will soon be out of sorrow and out of pain: this heart will suffer no more, and this head will no longer be distracted! Oh, the hopes of heaven, but they're sweet and consolin' on the bed of death!"

"Cherish them, dear Mary," said Father Roche; "for I believe you will soon—very soon indeed—realize them. Her pulse," he added, "is scarcely perceptible, and you hear how very feeble her voice is."

"What are we to do, then?" asked her son; "do you think, my dear mother, that you could bear removal?"

"No—ah, no,"—she replied, "No—I feel that I am going fast—my feet and limbs are like marble, and the cowld is gettin' into my heart."

"Ah, my darling mother," said the son, in tears, "but that was *the warm* and the lovin' heart!"

Father Roche then having put on his stole, went to her side, and, as is usual in all cases of approaching death, where a priest is in attendance, administered to her the last rites of religion. Here in the mountain solitude did he cheer her departing spirit, as he had that of her husband, with the sustaining hopes of a glorious immortality.

"Now," said she, "I know that I die happy; for here where I couldn't expect it, has the light of God's mercy shone upon me. He has brought my son to my side—He has brought the consolations of religion to my heart, when I was lyin' helpless and alone in this mountain desert. Yes," she said, "I forgive all those who ill-treated both me and mine—and the worst I wish them is, *to pray that God may forgive them, and turn their hearts.* And now, Hugh, I am ready—Torley, my manly son, and my own Brian, with the fair locks, we'll soon be all united again—and never to part any more—never to part any more! Ned," said she, "kiss me; you are all I now lave behind me out of my fine family; but God's will be done! I need not bid you," she added, "to bury me here, for I know you will—and I wish you would put little Brian's coffin on mine, in order that my darling child may sleep where I'd have him sleep, until the Resurrection Day—that is, upon this lovin' mother's breast. But what is this?" she asked; "is there a light—a bright light—about me? I feel happy—happy. Oh sure this is the love of God that is to recompense me for all!"

Ned, who had her in his arms, felt her head fall down, and on looking at her, he perceived that she had actually passed away into the happiness of God's love, which, no doubt, diffused its radiance through her spirit that was now made perfect.

"Yes," said Father Roche, wiping his eyes, "a pure and noble spirit has indeed passed from a life of great trial and crushing calamity into one of glory and immortality. There is a proof, and a consoling proof, of the lustre which so often irradiates the death-beds of the humble classes in Ireland, who die far from the knowledge and notice

of the great, whom their toil probably goes to support."

"Yes," replied Ned, bitterly; "it's an aisy thing for Lord Cumber to know what's either good or bad upon his estate—how the people live, or how they die—very aisy, indeed, for a man who never puts a foot on it, but leaves them to the mercy of such villains as M'Clutchy. Had he been livin' on his property, or looked afther it as he ought to do, I don't think it's lyin' stretched, far from house or habitation, that you would be this night, my blessed mother—my poor father, and your childre cut down by persecution, and yourself, without house or home, runnin' an' unhappy, deranged creature about the country, and now lyin' there widout a roof to cover your poor remains."

"Do not say so," replied Father Roche; "she shall be waked in my house, and buried at my expense."

"If you'll allow her to be waked there, I will thank you, Father Roche; but the expenses of her burial, I am myself able to pay; and so long as I am, you know, I could not suffer any one else to intherfare; many thanks to you, sir, in the meantime."

"Well then," said the priest, "as I know and understand the feeling, I shall not press the matter; but since the body cannot be left without protection, I think you had better go down, and fetch a few neighbors with a door, and let her be removed forthwith. I shall remain till you return.

"It's a very hard thing, Father Roche, that you should be put to sich a duty," replied O'Regan; "but the truth is, I wouldn't take all the money in the King's exchequer, and remain here by myself."

"But I have no such fears," said the priest; "I shall stay within the shelter of this old ruin until your return, which will be as quick, I trust, as possible."

O'Regan was about to start off at the top of his speed; and Father Roche began to walk to and fro the old ruin, struck by the pale moonlight, as it fell through the gray stone windows, loopholes, and breaches of the walls, lighting up some old remnant of human ambition, or perhaps exposing a grinning skull, bleached by time and the elements into that pale white, which is perhaps the most ghastly exponent of death and the dead. At this moment, however, they were each in no small degree startled by the sound of human voices; and, to complete their astonishment, two figures approached the humble grave on which the dead body of Mary O'Regan lay stretched. On turning towards the moon they were both immediately recognized by the priest and O'Regan, who looked on in silence and wonder, and waited to hear, if possible, the object of their visit.

"I say again," said Phil, "I say my jolly ph-foolosophy—eh foolosopher—that is to say, you deal in foolosophy—an ex-excellent trade for a fool—I say again, you have brought me the wrong way, or misled me somehow— upon my honor and reputation, Rimon, I rather think you're short of sense, my man. Come, I say, let us be off home again—what the devil did you bring me to a church-yard for?—eh?"

"Whisht," said Raymond, "let us see—who have we here? Ah," said he, stooping down and feeling the chill of death upon her features, "it is Mary O'Regan, and she's dead—dead!"

"Dead," exclaimed Phil, starting, "curse you, Rimon, let us be off at full speed, I say—Gad, I'm in a nice pickle; and these pistols are of no use against any confounded ghost."

On hearing that Phil carried pistols, O'Regan started, and had it been daylight, a fierce but exulting fire might have been seen to kindle in his eyes.

"What can have brought them here?" asked Father Roche; "I cannot understand their visit at such an hour to such a place as this."

"A few minutes, sir, will make all clear, maybe."

"And what brought poor Mary here to die, do you know?" inquired Raymond; "no you don't," he replied, "but I will tell you—she came to die near poor White-head that she loved so much, and near Torley, and near poor Hugh himself, that the blood-hounds—"

"Damn my honor, Rimon, if I can stand this any longer—I'm off."

"Hould!" said Raymond, with a shout whose echoes rang through the ruins; "you musn't go till you hear me out," and on uttering the words he gripped him by the arm, and led him over to the dead body.

"I'm goin' to tell you myself," proceeded Raymond; "she came to die here that she might be near *them*—do you onderstand?" and he involuntarily pressed the arm he still held with his huge iron finger, until Phil told him he could not bear the pain. "She came to die here that she mightn't have far to go to them; for you don't know, maybe, that it's on their grave she is now lyin':—ha, ha; that's one. DID YOU EVER SEE A MURDHERED WOMAN, CAPTAIN PHIL?"

"Never," replied Phil, who stood passive in his grip.

"Ha, ha, ha," he chuckled, "that's not a good one. Well, but, did you ever see a murdherer?"

"Some o' the blood-hounds pinked fellows, I believe, but then they were only rebels and Pap-papishes."

"Ha, ha," still chuckled Raymond, as he confronted himself by degrees with Phil, "I swore it for poor White-head's sake—and for Mary M'Loughlin's sake—an' for twenty sakes besides."

"God! Rimon, what do you mean?" said Phil, "there's a dreadful look in your eyes—Rimon, you are an excellent fellow; but tell me what you mean?"

"To show you a murdherer," he replied; "and now I have one by the throat!"

As he spoke, he clutched him by the neck with a grasp that might strangle a tiger. Then, as before in O'Regan's sheeling, all the fury of the savage came upon him; his eyes blazed fearfully—the white froth of passion, or rather of madness, appeared upon his lips, and his howlings resembled the roaring of some beast of prey, while tearing up its quivering victim in the furious agonies of protracted hunger. In a moment Phil was down, and truly the comparison of the beast of prey, and his struggling victim, is probably the most appropriate that could be made; when we consider the position of the one writhing helplessly upon the ground, and the other howling in all the insatiable wildness of bloodthirsty triumph over him. So hard and desperate indeed was the tug for life, and so deadly was the immediate sense of suffocation becoming, that Phil, whose eyes were already blinded, and who was only able to utter a low hoarse gurgle, which sounded like the death-rattle in his throat, was utterly unable either to think of or to use his fire-arms. The onset, too, was so quick, that neither Father Roche nor O'Regan had time to render assistance.

"Great heaven," exclaimed the priest, "is the young man, bad and wicked as he is, to be murdered before our eyes by that gigantic idiot!"

He proceeded to the spot just when Raymond was about to repeat, in reality, the imaginary scene with the pillow.

"Ho, ho," he shouted, "give us betther measure—a little more of it—the same tongue never was your own friend, nor the friend of any one else—ha, ha,—ho, ho, ho. There, that's one—take it out o' that, will you?—whoo, hoo—hello, hach, ach!—This for White-head, and this for Mary M'—"

"What's this, Raymond?" said Father Roche, gently laying his hand upon his huge arm, the muscles of which, now strung into almost superhuman strength, felt as hard as oak. "Stop, Raymond," he proceeded, "would you like that work yourself, my good boy?"

"Father Roche!" said Raymond, relaxing his hold more from surprise than anything else.

"If you will take your hand from his throat, Raymond, my good boy, I will tell you where you will get a cock that no other bird in the country could have a chance with. There's a good boy—let him go. Follow me over here, and leave him."

"A cock that cannot be beat?" exclaimed Raymond, starting at once to his feet, "no, but will you?"

"I will tell you where he is," said the priest, "but do not harm him more," pointing to Phil,—"I only trust in God that it is not too late." He stooped to examine Phil's countenance, and indeed the sight was as strongly calculated to excite mirth as disgust. There he lay, his foul tongue projecting out of his mouth, which was open and gasped for wind; his huge goggle eyes, too, had their revolting squint heightened by terror into an expression very like that assumed by a clown when he squints and makes faces at the audience, whilst his whole countenance was nearly black from excess of blood, and the veins about his forehead and temples stood out swollen as if filled with ink.

"Aye, you may look at him," said Raymond—"he is a purty boy now, countin' the stars there. A beauty you were, a beauty you are, and so I leave you!"

"Come over," said Father Roche to O'Regan, "and see if you can render him any assistance. You are stronger."

"Would he know me, do you think?" said O'Regan before he went over.

"At present, certainly not," replied Father Roche; "but he is breathing, and in about eight or ten minutes I hope he will probably recover."

O'Regan went over, loosed his cravat, and stayed with him a few moments, after which he returned to Raymond and the priest, who were now in the ruin.

"I think he will be well enough shortly," he observed, "but the truth is, Raymond, that *he* wasn't worth your vengeance. I will now go and fetch a few of the neighbors to assist in bringing my poor mother down from this lonely spot, that she may at least have a Christian roof over her."

He accordingly departed, and Father Roche in a few minutes had Phil's mind completely disentangled from the train of dark thoughts and affectionate impulses by which it had been for some time past alternately influenced.

"Raymond," said the priest, "how could you think of committing such a frightful act as murder?"

"Ha, ha!" he replied, "sure it was when I thought of Mary M'Loughlin and poor White-head."

"And how did it happen that, of all places in the world, you both came here?"

"Becaise White-head and the rest are here. Sure he thought he was comin' to a poor creature upon no good, and when he was drunk it was aisey to bring him anywhere—ha, ha! that's one too—for *I* can manage him."

"I thank the Almighty Father," ejaculated the priest, "that I was able to prevent another murder this night—for most assuredly, Raymond, you would have taken his life."

"Ho, ho!" exclaimed the fool, with a little of his former ferocity, "sure it was for that I brought him here—aye, aye, nothin' else."

"Well, while you live," continued the old man, "never attempt to have the blood of a fellow creature on your soul. I must go over and see how he feels—I perceive he is able to sit up. Young man," he proceeded, addressing Phil, "I render God thanks that I have been instrumental in saving your life this night."

"That's more than I know," replied this grateful youth; "I neither saw nor heard you, if you were."

"It matters not," replied the other, "let me assist you to rise."

"I can rise myself now," said he, getting up and staggering; "I'll transport you and that d——d savage, Rimon the hatter. You are a po-popish priest, and you cannot be he-here at this time of night for much good. Never fear but I'll make you give an account of yourself, my old buck."

The reader is already aware that Phil had been far advanced in intoxication previously; but when we take into account the fearful throttling he received, and the immense rush of blood which must have taken place to the brain, we need not be surprised that he should relapse into the former symptoms of his intoxication, or, in other words, that its influence should be revived in him, in consequence of the treatment he received.

"I think," continued Phil, "that I have got you and Rimon in my power now, and damn my hon-honor, may be we won't give you a chase a-across the country that'll put mettle into your heels; hip, hip, hurrah! Ay, and may be we won't give big M'—M'Cabe, or M'Flail, a run that will do him good too, hip, hip—so good good-night till I see you-you just as you ought to be—knitting your stock-cocking like Biddy O'Doherty; hip!"

He then staggered on homewards, half stupid from the strangulation scene, and very far removed from sobriety, in consequence of the copious libations of brandy he had swallowed in the course of the day and evening.

"Good night, Captain Phil," cried Raymond after him; "when will you come to the hills to meet Bet M'Cracken again?—ha, ha! there now, that's one."

"Poor infatuated young man," exclaimed Father Roche; "if you were not so completely an object of contempt, you would surely be one of compassion. May God in his mercy pity and relieve the unfortunate people whose destinies, domestic comforts, and general happiness, are to such an extent in the keeping of men like you and your wretched father—men who breathe an atmosphere rank with prejudices of the worst description, and hot with a spirit of persecution that is as free from just policy as it is from common sense! When will this mad spirit of discord between Christians—mad, I call it, whether it poison religion, politics, or inflame religion—be banished by mutual charity, and true liberty, from our unhappy country? and when will the rulers of that country learn that most important secret, how to promote the happiness of the people without degradation on the one hand, or insolent triumph on the other?"

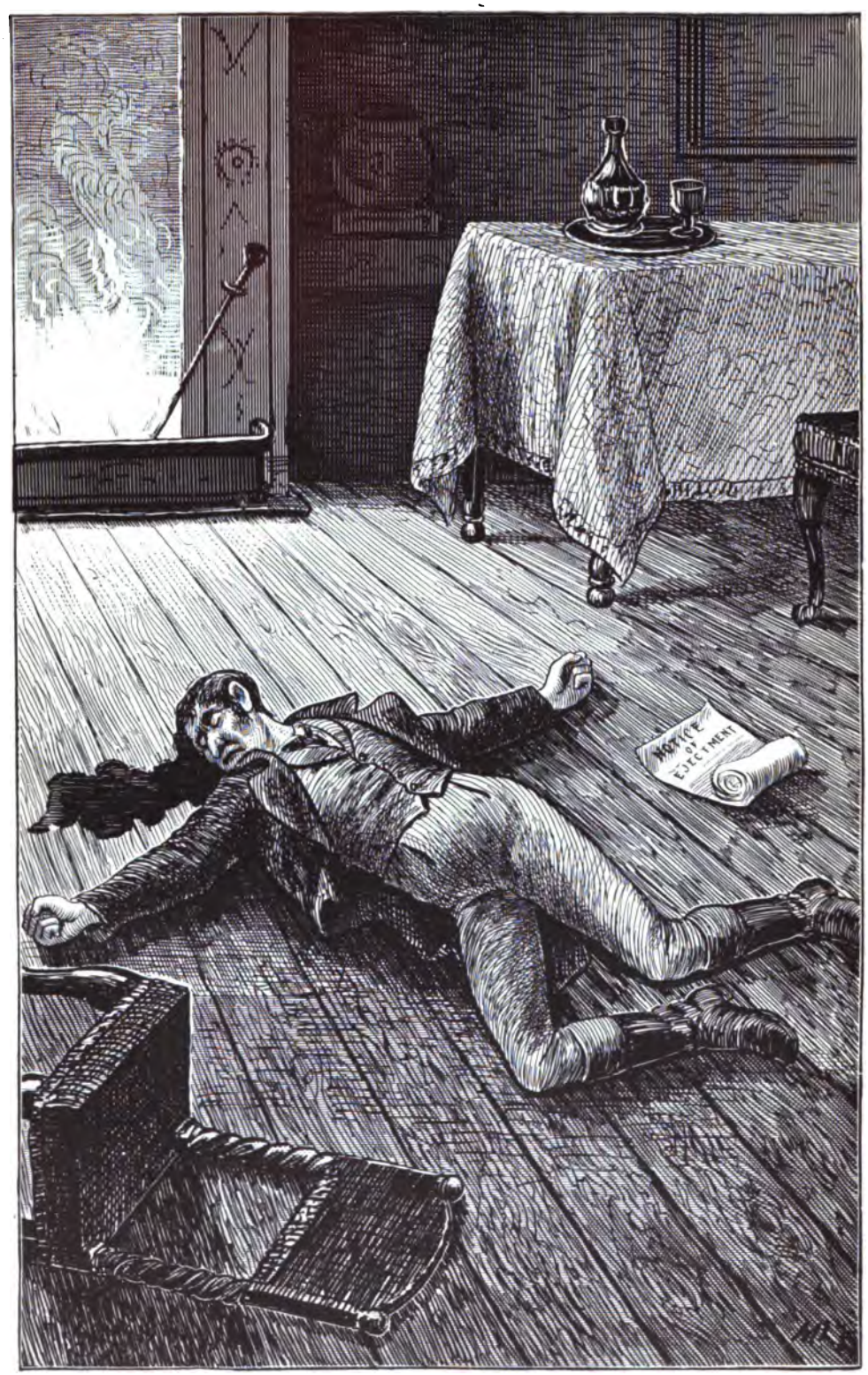
O'Regan's return with the neighbors from the lower country, was somewhat, and yet not much, more protracted than Father Roche had expected. Considering everything, however, there was little time lost, for he had brought about a dozen and a half of the villagers with him. Having reached the cold bed where she lay, and where all her affections had dwelt, they placed her upon a door, and having covered her body with a cloak brought for the purpose, the little solitary procession directed their steps to that humble roof which had been, ever since Father Roche occupied it, a sheltering one to destitution, and poverty, and repentance.

As they began to move away, O'Regan said—

"Excuse me for a few minutes—I wish to go back to the spot where my father and brothers sleep; that surely is but natural, and I will soon overtake you."

They then proceeded, and he remained at the graves of his relatives. He stood over them in silence for many minutes, keeping his face covered with his hands. At length he knelt down and sobbed out aloud.

"Father," said he, "I have fulfilled my oath—Torley, I have fulfilled my oath—Brian, my sweet and fair-haired child—your brother, when none was left to do you justice but myself, has fulfilled his oath. Listen to me and rest quiet in your graves.



SUCH WAS THE END OF VALENTINE M'CLUTCHY.—*Va. McClutchy*, last paragraph of chap. xxx., p. 365.

The oppressor is no more—the scourge of the poor—the persecutor—the robber that trampled upon all law—that laughed at justice—that gave vent to his bad passions, because he knew that there was neither law nor justice in the country to protect people like you, or to punish himself;—that oppressor—that scourge of the poor—that persecutor—that robber, is this night sent to his account by my hand—for by no other had he such a right to fall.—Sleep quiet and contented in your graves, my father—and Torley, and poor Brian! As we had no law for us in this country—*I* was his law—I was his justice—and so may God prosper me, if there is not a heavy load taken off of my heart by the fate that has come on the villain by my hand!"

He spoke these words in tears and deep sobs, after which he composed himself, so as that he might appear in his usual mood, that of simple grief, on rejoining his companions.

The morning of the following day, the town, and neighborhood of Castle Cumber were in a state of extraordinary excitement and tumult.

"Valentine M'Clutchy, Esq.," said the True Blue, "the excellent and humane Agent of the Castle Cumber property, was most barbarously shot dead in his parlor, about ten o'clock on the previous night. By this diabolical act, the poor of that admirably managed property," continued his brother Orangeman, "have lost, &c., &c."

But it is really sickening to read these unprincipled vindications of the scoundrels who drive the people into crime and bloodshed by their rack-renting and oppression. It is time that honest men should speak out, and fasten upon these "*scourges of their country*," their proper appellative. To this murder, as to others of a similar character, there never was any clew found; notwithstanding the large rewards that were subscribed by the gentry of the county and by government. Phil was too drunk the evening before to remember anything distinctly. His pistols were never found, nor was any other discovery made which could fasten even suspicion on any particular individual.

If Phil, however, were drunk the night before his father's death, he was sober enough the night after it. On that night there was not a hill head on all the Castle Cumber estate which had not its bonfire and its rejoicing—for the re-appointment of Mr. Hickman to the agency. It might, however, be observed in general—and it is frightful to be forced to record such a state of things—that the tenantry, one and all appeared to feel a singular complacency of temper on the occasion—a strong sense, as it were, of great relief—a revival of good spirits—a cherishing of rational hope—associated with dreams of domestic comfort, reasonable indulgence, sympathy, and common justice.

Such was the end of Valentine M'Clutchy—and as we have only one other fact in connection with him to record, we may as well record it here. On the morning after his death, his mother, Kate Clank, was found dead on the steps of Castle Cumber gaol, whither, it would seem, she had come, as if from a principle of early recollection, to the spot where she had first drawn her breath in innocence; and who can tell, or will any one dare to say, that she died in guilt, or unforgiven? That is only known to God, by whom she was to be judged.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Richard Topertoe and his Brother—Lord Cumber's Duel—Shot by Hartley—Dies in the Vindication of a Tyrannical Principle—Marriage of Harman and Mary M'Loughlin—Solomon struck off the Roll—Handsome Compliment to the Judge—Solomon's Death—Dances the Swaggering Jig—Lucre's Virtues and Christian Death.

The Honorable Richard Alexander Topertoe, for he was sometimes called the one and sometimes the other, but most frequently Richard, had been for several years on the continent, where he found it more economical to reside than at home. A circumstance connected with a gambling debt of his brother's, communicated by a friend, brought him suddenly to London, where he arrived in time to save his brother's reputation and fortune, and most probably his life, for Lord Cumber, be it known, was very nearly what is termed a professed duelist. Having succeeded in saving his brother from being fleeced by a crew of aristocratic black-legs, and thereby rendered an appeal to the *duello* unnecessary, he happened to become acquainted with a very wealthy merchant, whose daughter, in the course of a few months, he wooed and won. The thing in fact is common, and has nothing at all of romance in it. She had wealth and beauty; he had some title. The father, who passed off to a different counting-house, about a couple of months after their marriage, left him and her to the enjoyment of an immense property in the Funds; and sooth to say, it could not have got into better hands. She was made the Honorable Mrs. Richard Topertoe, and if a cultivated understanding, joined to an excellent and humane heart, deserved a title, in her person they did. After his arrival in

London he had several conversations with his brother, whose notions with regard to property he found to be of the cool, aristocratic, and contemptuous school; that is to say, he did not feel himself bound to neglect the pleasures and enjoyments of life, and to look after his tenants. It was enough that he received their rents, and paid a sensible Agent to collect them. What more could he do? Was he to become their *slave?*

Richard, who now felt quite anxious to witness the management of his brother's estate—if only for the purpose of correcting his bad logic upon the subject of property, came over *incognito* to the metropolis, accompanied by his wife; and it was to his brother, under the good-humored sobriquet of Spinageberd, that he addressed the letters recorded in these volumes. He also had a better object in view, which was to purchase property in the country, and to reside on it. That he did not succeed in rooting out of Lord Cumber's mind his senseless prejudices with respect to the duties of a landlord, was unfortunately none of his fault. All that man could do, by reasoning, illustration, and remonstrance, he did; but in vain; the old absurd principle of the landlord's claims upon his tenantry, Lord Cumber neither could nor would give up; and having made these necessary observations, we proceed with our narrative.

Better than a week had now elapsed; M'Clutchy had been interred with great pomp—all the Orangemen of the neighboring districts having attended "his honored and lamented remains" to the grave, each dressed in his appropriate Orange costume. The provincial chaplain, remarkable for singing his own songs, had been engaged to preach his funeral sermon, which he did with a force of eloquence and pathos that literally brought the tears of those who were acquainted with Val's virtues down their cheeks—but of none else. He dwelt with particular severity upon those who had kindled bonfires, and hung his respectable son, "our esteemed brother, Captain Phil, in effigy; whilst the sacred remains of that father whom he loved so well, and who so well deserved his love, and the love of all who had the pleasure and happiness of his acquaintance, &c., &c., were not yet cold."

All this, we say, had taken place, and our friend Hartley was seated quietly at his breakfast one morning, when a gentleman named Fenton waited upon him, on the part of Lord Cumber. After the usual salutations, Mr. Fenton opened the business on which he had come.

"I regret, Mr. Hartley, that there should be any misunderstanding between you and Lord Cumber."

"Not more so than I do, Mr. Fenton, I assure you; Lord Cumber, I presume, has arrived then? But pardon me, have you breakfasted?"

"Thank you, sir, I have breakfasted. He has arrived, sir, and requested me to wait upon you for an apology. It appears, according to my instructions, as the lawyers say, that you have charged him with holding and exercising tyrannical principles as a landlord. Now this, you know, is really a thing that a man like him could not overlook."

"Of course, Mr. Fenton, he placed our correspondence in your hands."

"Unquestionably he submitted it to me, previous to my consenting to act."

"And may I ask your own opinion, Mr. Fenton?"

"As an extensive landed proprietor, Mr. Hartley, I must say that I agree with him; I think a landlord has a *right* to demand *every* kind of support from his tenant, and that if the tenant claims the privilege of running counter to his landlord's interest, then the landlord is justified in removing the tenant off his property as soon as he can."

"In that case, then," replied Hartley, "I have no concession to make, and no apology to offer. I regret this business very much; but Lord Cumber places me in a position which I cannot leave without dishonor."

"He also wishes to have an explanation with respect to the circumstances which induced so many of his corps of yeomanry to enroll their names in your new troop."

"I have explained that already, by stating that I never solicited any of his men to join my troop; they came of their own free will, and I received them, and certainly will receive as many as come to us under similar circumstances."

"Then I suppose you will not cause them to withdraw from your troop, as Lord Cumber insists on."

"Insists on! Will he allow neither the tenant nor the yeoman the use of his free will, Mr. Fenton? I see nothing now remains but to refer you to my friend, Captain Ormsby, who will assist you in making all the necessary arrangements; and the sooner this unpleasant matter is terminated, the better." After bidding each other good morning, Mr. Fenton departed to make, as Hartley termed them, "the necessary arrangements."

The next morning at day-break, in a paddock about two miles from Castle Cumber, there stood a very elegant young man, of a high and aristocratic bearing, accompanied by Mr. Fenton, to whom he appeared to be relating some pleasant anecdote, if one could judge by the cheerful features of the narrator,

and the laughter of his companion. A carriage stood by a kind of scalp in the road, which carriage contained a medical man, who, indeed, was present with great reluctance. In a few minutes a gig, containing two persons, drove to the same spot at a rapid pace, a gentleman on horseback accompanying it; these were Mr. Hartley, his friend, Captain Ormsby, and a medical gentleman, whom he also had brought on the occasion.

On meeting, the two principals bowed politely, addressing each other in friendly terms, and were actually advancing to shake hands, when they mutually checked themselves, and Hartley, smiling, said:—

"My Lord, I fear that this is really a foolish business—why, it is literally fighting a duel upon abstract principles."

"It is fighting a duel upon a principle, which, whether abstract or not, I will always support. If, however, you wish to avoid a duel, Mr. Hartley, you have only to withdraw the offensive term you applied to the principle in question."

"As soon, my Lord, as you renounce the principle itself."

"Enough," said Lord Cumber, "gentlemen, please to let us take our ground."

Nothing could surpass the coolness, the ease of manner, and fine bearing of both. The ground was measured at twelve paces, and it was agreed by the seconds, from principles of humanity, that they should fire by signal. Indeed, we may say here, that the seconds did everything that men so circumstanced could do, to prevent the necessity of fighting. Each, however, was high-minded and courageous, and knowing that his opponent was remarkable for bravery and success as a duellist, refused to make any concession. They accordingly took their grounds, resolved to abide the event.

Having been placed, the seconds, previous to their agreement as to the signal to be given, withdrew a little, so as to be completely out of hearing. While discussing this point, a circumstance occurred worthy of notice, and, we must say, the high-minded courage which it manifested ought to have restrained Lord Cumber, as a man of honor, from turning a pistol against Hartley on the occasion. Both were standing, as we have said, awaiting the signal to fire, when Hartley said:—

"My Lord Cumber a word with you."

"It is too late, Mr. Hartley," replied that nobleman; "I am on my ground."

"It is not an apology, my Lord," replied the other smiling; "but really, as a man of honor, I cannot fight you as we stand at present: we are not upon equal terms."

"Speak to your second, sir," said his opponent.

"You perceive he happens to be engaged just now," rejoined Hartley; "but, in fact, the communication can as well be made to your lordship; I have just observed, my Lord, that the bullet of your pistol has dropped out, and I believe, if you will take the trouble to look upon the ground, you will see it at your feet; your second, I presume, has forgot to put in wadding."

"Mr. Hartley," replied Lord Cumber, "I always believed you to be a gentleman, and a man of bravery; I feel it now, and whatever the event of this meeting may be, I shall render you ample justice. I thank you, sir, for that act of true courage and honor."

At length the bullet was restored to its place, and the seconds drew aside to give the signal, which was letting fall a white handkerchief, when each was immediately to fire.

How short a span there is between life and eternity! There they stood, both in high health and strength, full of the world, and the world's spirit, and yet in how brief a space was one of them to appear before the judgment-seat of God!

At length the signal was given, the handkerchief fell, two shots were heard, one instantly following the other. Hartley having fired, dropped his pistol hand by his side, whilst Lord Cumber raised his left hand to his breast, or rather was in the act of raising it, when he fell, gathered up his knees to his chin, and immediately stretching out his limbs at full length, was a corpse: thus dying as he did, in the maintenance of an unjust and tyrannical principle. And so passed away, by an untimely death, a man who was not destined to be a bad character. His errors as a man—a private nobleman—we do not canvass any farther than as they affected his duties as a landlord. His errors as a landlord were the errors of his time, and represented the principles of his class. These were contempt for, and neglect of, the condition and comforts of his tenantry, of the very individuals from whose exertions and struggles he derived his support. Strange, indeed, it is that men placed as his lordship was, should forget a principle, which a neglect of their duties may one day teach them to their cost—that principle is the equal right of every man to the soil which God has created *for all.* The laws of agrarian property are the laws of a class, and it is not too much to say, that if the rights of this class to legislate for *their own interests* were severely investigated, it might appear upon just and rational principles that the landlord is nothing more nor less than a pen-

sioner upon popular credulity, and lives upon a fundamental error in society created by the class to which he belongs. Think of this, gentlemen, and pay attention to your duties.

Whilst Lord Cumber, who never communicated a syllable touching the duel with Hartley to his brother, was engaged in that mortal conflict, as it unhappily turned out to be, the Honorable Richard Topertoe was engaged in a far different occupation. On that same morning, in Castle Cumber church, he had the pleasure of giving away the hand of Mary M'Loughlin to her lover, Harman, and it was on their return from her father's house, after having witnessed their subsequent marriage by Father Roche, that he met his brother's carriage containing his dead body. Richard Topertoe possessed a mind above an empty title, and, perhaps, there lived not a man who more sincerely deplored the event which made him Lord Cumber, and put him in possession of a property which he did not require.

Our chronicles draw to a close. The contemplated interview between Mrs. Lenehan, her brother, and Solomon, never in fact took place. Solomon fell very seasonably into ill health, and could be seen by nobody, except his physician, who was nearly as religious as himself, and besides, a member of his own congregation. In the trust, however, which the widow placed in Solomon, she was, to use his own language, abundantly justified, as the event proved. Honest Solomon defrauded her out of the money, and had the satisfaction of reflecting that he reduced her and her family to beggary. Breach of trust it appears is a very slight thing in the eye of the law, and Solomon, encouraged by this consideration, ruined the unfortunate widow and her orphans. This act of gross, unprincipled robbery was, however, not unpunished. In about a month after he had perpetrated it, the following scene occurred in the Court of King's Bench, in presence of many who will have little difficulty in bringing it to their recollection.

A thin, pale-faced man, far gone apparently in serious illness, supported on each side by a religious friend who had not given him up, one of them by the way was a Scotchman, and a far greater knave and hypocrite than himself—approached the table, and requested permission to address the Court, previous to the exercise of its jurisdiction in striking him off the Roll of Attornies. This permission was granted, and Solomon, for it was he, spoke briefly as follows :—

"My Lord, you see before you a frail sinner, who will soon appear before a greater and more awful tribunal than yours. I am not here, my Lord, to defend an act to which I was prompted by—may I be permitted to say so—by my very virtues. Some men, my Lord, are ruined by excellent qualities, and some by those which are the reverse. As touching mine, my Lord, and the principles upon which—but an explanation on this subject would not become *me*. Oh, no, my Lord; but your lordship sees these tears; your lordship sees this weak, feeble, and emaciated frame. You perceive, in fact, my Lord, that I am scarcely a subject for the severity of this or any other court. In the meantime, may I be prepared to meet a greater, a more awful one! May that be granted, my Lord! oh, may He grant it! I am very feeble, my Lord, but still able to entreat that your lordship will temper justice with mercy. About a month ago, my Lord, when I little apprehended the occurrence which—but may His will be done! My honesty is known, my Lord; it is known there," pointing up—"about a month ago, I say, I had my last child baptized by—I am ashamed to tell your lordship what name, lest you might imagine that I done so for the purpose of biasing your judgment in the—No, my Lord, I will add nothing to the simple fact—I had my last child baptized by the name of Richard Pennywinkle M'Slime —a circumstance which fills my heart with sentiments of joy and gratification up to this moment. And I am not depressed—far from it. This, my Lord, is a trial, and I know, for I feel, that it is good for me to be tried, inasmuch as it is a proof that I am cared for THERE!" and he pointed again upwards as he spoke.

The judge, who was a kind-hearted and humane man, was melted even unto tears which he could with difficulty restrain whilst he spoke.

"Unhappy man," said he, "I have been for several years in the habit of dispensing law—"

"Justice, you mean, my Lord," said Solomon; "oh, justice, justice, or rather mercy, my Lord! little of law have you ever dispensed! Oh, little of law—but much of justice. May He be praised for it! amen, amen!"

"Your case, unhappy man, is one which places me in a peculiarly painful position indeed. The compliment you were good enough to pay me—I mean that of calling your child after me—makes me feel as if in addressing you I was—" here he sobbed and wiped his eyes bitterly, and was about to proceed, when Widow Lenehan's counsel rose up, and said :—

"My Lord, it is really too bad that hypocrisy should continue its impositions even to the last act of the drama. I feel it my duty

to disabuse your lordship in this matter of naming the child after you. Perhaps the compliment will be considerably diminished, if not absolutely reversed, when you come to know, my Lord, that the child which bears your lordship's name—if it does bear it—is an illegitimate one, and very unworthy, indeed, my Lord of bearing such an honored name as yours."

The judge had been shedding tears for Solomon's calamities during this address, but it is almost unnecessary to say that the change from the benevolent and pathetic to the indignant was as fine a specimen as ever was given of the ludicrous.

"Do you mean to tell me," said the judge, the whole features of his face in a state of transition that was perfectly irresistible; "do you mean to tell me that the child which the wretched man had the insolence to name after me, was not born in wedlock?"

"My Lord," said Solomon, "this is a subject on which, aided by my great namesake, the wisest of—"

"The decision of the court," continued the judge, "is, that your name be struck off the list of Attornies who practice here."

In the course of about six weeks afterwards might be read, in all the metropolitan papers, the following announcement: "Died of deep decline, in the forty-eighth year of his age, Solomon M'Slime, Esq., Attorney-at-Law. Indeed we are bound to say, that for the last and most exemplary portion of his life, he ought rather to have been termed Attorney-at-Gospel. We are glad to hear, for the sake of his interesting family, that his life was insured for the sum of two thousand pounds, which has been paid to them."

About four months after Solomon's death, an American vessel was lying at the Pigeon House, waiting for the tide. Several of the passengers were assembled in Mrs. Thumbstall's tavern—previous to the departure of the brig—where, as was then usual, they amused themselves by drinking punch and dancing. Among them was a little thin fellow, dressed in a short frieze coat, striped waistcoat, corduroy breeches, and stout brogues; beside him sat a comely, youthful, but somewhat prim female, dressed as a plain peasant girl. The moment the floor became vacant, the little frieze-coated fellow got to his legs, accompanied by the female, and addressed the musician as follows:

"My good friend, there is—is much cheerfulness in thy music, for which reason this young person and I will trouble you to play us that sustaining psalm—I mean that blessed air called the Swaggering Jig, which is really a consoling planxtic—come, Susanna."

Good by, Solomon, thou art now gone to that land of true liberty, and sorry are we to say, that thou has left so many who are so much worse than thyself behind thee! One of the most virtuous acts of thy life was the defrauding the Spiritual Railway Assurance office of two thousand pounds upon the fiction of thy death; which, truth to say, was a very bitter fiction to them.

Our chronicles are closed. Need we say that Richard Topertoe, on gaining the title and estate, became a resident landlord, and is at this day enjoying a green and happy old age upon one of the best managed properties in Ireland, where his tenantry are grateful, prosperous, and happy. Mary M'Loughlin, her husband, and family, lived happily, as they deserved to live, and some of them live yet, and will easily recognize themselves in these pages.

Of Phil, we must say a word or two. On finding himself the uncontrolled inheritor of his father's ill-gotten wealth, he accelerated his progress in drunkenness and profligacy. He took to the turf, became a gambler and spendthrift, and went backwards in squandering his fortune through as unprincipled a course as his father pursued in making it. From step to step he came down until nothing was left. Having no manly principle to sustain him, he fell from one stage of rascality and meanness to another, until he succeeded at length in getting himself appointed as an under turnkey in Castle Cumber Gaol. A whisper has gone abroad, that upon a critical occasion when the Sheriff, owing to the death of a certain functionary essential to the discharge of his duty, felt himself considerably at a loss, he found in one of the under turnkeys a convenient substitute.

The living of Castle Cumber, left vacant by the promotion of Mr. Lucre to a Bishopric, was given to an Englishman, as was then the practice, and would be now, were it not for the influence of common shame and public opinion.

Mr. Clement opened an Academy in Castle Cumber, and succeeded; for he thought it a wiser thing to live by teaching a school, than to suffer his large family and himself to starve by the gospel.

We now beg to close, by a paragraph from the True Blue:—

"*Elevation of the Rev. Dr. Lucre to the See of* ——.

"For many years a duty at once so painful and so delightful, has not devolved upon us as a public journalist. The elevation of the Right Rev. Father in God, Phineas Lucre,

to the See of ——, is a dispensation to our Irish Establishment which argues the beneficent hand of a wise and overruling Providence. In him we may well say, that another bright and lustrous star is added to that dark, but beautiful galaxy, in the nether heavens above us, which is composed of our blessed Bishops. The diocese over which he has been called by the Holy Spirit to preside, will know, as they ought, how to appreciate his learning and attainments. But what shall we say of the poor of Castle Cumber, to whom he has been such a kind, meek, charitable, and consoling dispenser of God's gifts—and God's word? At the bed of death, of disease, of poverty—at every post, no matter how poor, low, neglected, or how dangerous—there was he to be found, the champion of God—fighting his battles in peace, self-denial, and charity. It is true, he is not an Irishman; but is it not a blessed thing that such links of love as he, and of those who resemble him, should continue to bind the virtues of the two churches, and the two countries together? His Lordship was consecrated on last Sunday, by that Right Rev. and blessedly facetious prelate, Archbishop Drapely, who, in addition to his other evangelical gifts, is said to be a perfect Toler in canonicals. It is not often that so much piety proceeds from so comic a source."

Our readers can scarcely forget the circumstances of Mr. Lucre's departure out of this wicked, ungodly, and sensual world. About eight years ago, or less, he died in a very pious fit of apoplectic passion, brought on by his cook, in consequence of that important functionary having neglected the apostolic duty of dressing a haunch of venison, we presume, upon scriptural authority. We regret to say, for the sake of the Church, and the loss which she sustained in consequence, that the haunch in question was considerably overdone—a fact which one would scarcely imagine could have produced such important results upon the religion of the country as it did by his death.

With respect to Counsellor Browbeater, we have only to say, that the government of that period, having got out of him all the dirty work of which he was capable, felt extremely anxious to get rid of him as easily and safely as they could. Browbeater, however, who was a most insatiable leech, stuck to them, knowing that they could not well discharge him without a character. He was made a master in chancery, and had the honor of succeeding old Tom Silver, a lawyer, a gentleman, an orator, and a man of honor and integrity! And only think of Browbeater succeeding such an office, as excellent, respected, and admirable Tom Silver left behind him!

THE TITHE-PROCTOR.

PREFACE.

AFTER the reader shall have perused the annexed startling and extraordinary narrative, on which I have founded the tale of the Tithe-Proctor, I am sure he will admit that there is very little left me to say in the shape of a preface. It is indeed rarely, that ever a document, at once so authentic and powerful, has been found prefixed to any work of modern Irish Fiction—proceeding as it does, let me add, from the pen of a gentleman whose unassuming character and modesty are only surpassed by the distinction which his name has already gained in one of the most difficult but useful departments of our native literature.

I trust that there will be found nothing in the work which follows that is calculated to give any serious offence. Yet, when we look back upon the contentions, both political and polemical, by which this unhappy country in connection with tithe especially, has been so frequently and so bitterly distracted, we can hardly hope, that any writer, however anxious, nay studious, to avoid giving offence, can expect to treat such a subject without incurring animosity in *some* quarter. Be this as it may, I have only to say, on behalf of myself, that in composing the work I was influenced by nothing but a firm and honest determination to depict the disturbances arising from the tithe impost with a fair and impartial hand: and if any party shall feel hurt by observations which the necessity of rendering full justice to a subject so difficult have imposed upon me in the discharge of a public duty, I beg them to consider that such observations proceeded from no wish to offend existing prejudices, but are to be looked upon as arising inferentially from those stern and uncompromising claims of truth and justice, which equally disregard the prejudices of any and every party. After all, I am of opinion that the spirit in which the work is written will be found, whilst it correctly delineates the state and condition of the country during the fearful tumults and massacres of the Tithe Rebellion, to have left little, if anything, to be complained of in this respect.

In constructing narratives of this sort, it is to be understood that certain allowances are always made for small anachronisms that cannot be readily got over. The murder of the Bolands, for instance, occurred in the year 1808, and the massacre of Carrickshock, as it has been called, in 1832. It was consequently impossible for me to have availed myself of the annexed "Narrative" and brought in the "Massacre". in the same story, without bringing down the murder of the Bolands to a more recent date.

It may be objected that I have assumed, as the period of my story, one which was calculated to bring into light and action the worst feelings and the darkest criminals of my country. This, however, was not my fault. If they had not existed, I could not have painted them; and so long as my country is disgraced by great crimes, and her social state disorganized by men whose hardened vices bring shame upon civilization itself, so long, I add, these crimes and such criminals shall never be veiled over by me. I endeavor to paint Ireland, sometimes as she was, but always *as she is*, in order that she may see many of those debasing circumstances which prevent her from being what she *ought to be*. In the meantime, I trust the reader will have an opportunity of perceiving that I have not in the Tithe-Proctor, any more than in my other work, forgottten to show him that even in the most startling phases of Irish crime and tumult, I have by no means neglected to draw the warm, generous, and natural virtues of my countrymen, and to satisfy him that a very few guilty wretches are quite sufficient, however unjustly, to blacken and degrade a large district.

There is, however, a certain class of pseudo-patriots in this country, who are of opinion that every writer, professing to depict our national character and manners, should make it a point of conscience to suppress all that is calculated "to lessen us in the eyes of the world," as they are pleased to term it, and only to give to the public the bright and favorable side. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the moral dishonesty and meanness of a principle, at once so disgraceful

to literature and so repugnant to truth. These thin-skinned gentlemen are of opinion that the crime itself is a matter of trivial importance compared to the fact of its becoming known, and that provided the outside of the platter is kept clean, it matters not how filthy it may be within.

In the days of my boyhood and early life, the people of Ireland were, generally speaking, an honest, candid, faithful, and grateful people, who loved truth, and felt the practical influence of religious feeling strongly, but so dishonest and degrading has been the long curse of agitation, to which forms of it their moral and social principles have been exposed, that there probably could not be found in any country, an instance in which the virtues of the whole people have been so completely debauched and contaminated (I do not say voluntarily), as those of the Irish have been by the leading advocates of repeal. The degeneracy of character, occasioned by those tampering with our national virtues, is such as we shall not recover from these thirty years to come. Many of our best, mellow-toned, old virtues, that pass in an unbroken link of hereditary beauty from father to son, and from family to family, like some sacred and inestimable heirloom, at once reverenced and loved, are all gone—such as our love of truth, our simple devotion and patriarchal piety, our sincerity in all social intercourse, and others of the same stamp; whilst little else is left us but a barren catalogue of broken and dishonest promises, and the consciousness of having been at once fleeced and laughed at. And it would be well if we could stop here, but truth forces us onward. The Irishman of the present day—the creature of agitation—is neither honest, nor candid, nor manly, nor generous, but a poor, skulking dupe, at once slavish and insolent, offensive and cowardly—who carries, as a necessary consequence, the principles of political dishonesty into the practices of private life, and is consequently disingenuous and fraudulent.

Let me not be misunderstood. I love truth; and have never been either afraid or ashamed to speak it; and I trust I never shall. I now allude to the principles of Conciliation Hall, and the system by which they were led. I feel bound, however, to exempt the party called Young Irelanders from having had any participation in bringing about results so disastrous to the best moral interests of the country. It is true, that, as politicians, they were insane; but then they were at least sincere and honest; and I am satisfied that there is not a man of them, who would not have abandoned the object he had in view, sooner than accomplish it by sacrificing the popular virtues and moral character of the country for its attainment. I have myself been a strong anti-repealer during my whole life, and though some of the Young Irelanders are my personal friends, yet none know better than they do, that I was strenuously opposed to their principles, and have often endeavored—need I say unsuccessfully?—to dissuade them from the madness of their agitation.

Having made these few necessary observations, I now beg to introduce to my readers the extraordinary narrative already spoken of—a narrative whose force and graphic power will serve only to bring shame upon the feeble superstructure which I have endeavored to erect upon it. It is termed—

THE MURDER OF THE BOLANDS.

In the year 1808, there lived near Croom, in the county of Limerick, a farmer named Michael Boland. He was an intelligent and prosperous man, and the owner of many hundred acres of the best land in that fine county.

He had two sons and two daughters, all grown up to manhood and womanhood, in this year, and the parish chapel never saw, in their time, a finer family for stature, symmetry, and comeliness, attend its mass than Michael Boland, his wife, and children. With the growth of his family, his ambition and desire of increased wealthiness grew; and, by the agency of some hundred pounds, he became the tithe-proctor, or rector of several patches of tithes throughout the county.

At first he was successful in this speculation, and with his increased profits, himself and his children assumed a higher and more important tone and bearing in society. In fact, his sons and daughters passed as ladies and gentlemen, not only in external appearance, but in elegance of manners and cultivation of mind; for he spared no expense on their education, as well in his original as in his subsequent condition of life; besides that at this period, and for a long time previous, the County of Limerick was the great school-house, not only of Munster, but of all Ireland—*vide* Carleton's "Poor Scholar."

The sudden departure of the Bolands from the intercourse and intimate acquaintance of their former companions and neighbors, as well as the long brooding hatred and opposition of the people to the payment of tithes, soon gave rise to loud murmurs and sarcastic retrospective observations against them; and people far and near took every occasion to offend and insult them—both men and

women—wherever and whenever an opportunity of doing so, in a galling manner, offered. Often were the Misses Boland asked, when mounted on their side-saddles, did they remember when their mother used to be driving her cart-load of tankards of sour milk to the market of Limerick, and sitting there for days retailing it at a penny a gallon, &c.; and as often were the young brothers asked, when bursting over an old neighbor's fence, in scarlet and buckskin, if they remembered when their father and mother bore an active hand and shoulder to the carrying out and spreading of the manure to the fields, &c.

Far from being abashed at all this, the Bolands only sought ampler opportunities to annoy and exasperate their ill-wishers by more imperious airs to them, and a closer attendance to the gentlemanly sports of the country, but still they gave no tangible cause to quarrel broadly with them. While matters were going on in this way, they received a nocturnal anonymous letter, ordering them to send a few of their abundant stock of arms to a certain lonely place, for the benefit of the popular legislators of that turbulent county. This summons the Bolands answered by a letter of defiance, and a challenge to the parties to come and take them forcibly if they durst. They were again summoned for their arms, and cautioned to lower their demand for tithes. To this, too, they sent an exasperating response of defiance, and a challenge, after which they seriously went about fortifying their dwelling, and putting it into the best posture of defence against the assault which they were very certain would be made on them sooner or later.

They built a line of lofty strong stone walls around their house, offices, and other property, and, thus secure, they awaited anxiously the expected visit of their deadly enemies.

In the meantime the messengers of vengeance passed through all the counties of Munster, with an account of the rebellious designs of the Bolands, against the majesty of midnight legislation; and to collect levies of men, ammunition, army, and friends, for the purpose of making a certain destructive attack upon them.

One evening, about the latter end of November, the roads and paths leading to the little village of Kilteely, a few miles to the east of Boland's house, was observed to be more than usually thronged with men, on foot and on horseback, passing, as it were, to and from Limerick, and strangers, apparently, to all the inhabitants and to each other. Shortly after nightfall, the hill of Kilteely was seen covered with men and horses, and within an old ruined house on the top of the hill a dim light was seen to occasionally flitter. This ruin was full of respectably dressed men, and at one end of it, on chairs, and at a table, provided for the occasion, sat twelve of the most respectable of them, and a portly important-looking gentleman on an elevated chair at the end of the table. Two or three candles were burning, and some slips of paper were on the table.

After a silence of a few seconds, the *judge* asked, in an audible voice, if there was any business to be brought before the court on that night? He was immediately answered in a solemn tone, by more than one voice, that there was a great deal of business, but that only one case, that of Captain Right against Boland, should be brought before him at that present time. The judge then desired that the case be gone into. Whereupon a middle-sized well-set young man, about six-and-twenty years of age, whose name we know, and who sat behind the judge, now brought his chair forward to the table, on the judge's left hand, and unrolling a roll of paper, read in a low, solemn, but audible tone of voice, a series of charges preferred by the said Captain Right against the said Michael Boland and his sons.

The captain was then called up, and he deposed to different charges against the defendants—such as taking beforehand, or in reversion, several small farms *over the heads* of poor but solvent tenants, turning them adrift on the world, and converting their small agricultural farms into one or more large farms for grazing; thereby adding to the number of the destitute, and contracting the supply of agricultural produce—the payment to his laboring men of only eight-pence a day, which he compounded for in kind—potatoes, milk, &c., at twice, at least, what those commodities fetched him in the neighboring markets. These were only a few of the many charges of petty tyranny preferred against Boland; but the last and greatest of all was his Tithe Exactions.

Several witnesses were called up to prove these weighty offences, after which it was asked if the accused party had been served with notices to desist from those high misdemeanors; and if he had engaged any one to speak for him, or in his favor. After a short pause, a man above the middle size, with shaggy hair and beard, and of a sinister aspect, came up to the table and said, that although he had not been employed or deputed to appear for Mr. Boland and the young *masters* and misses, his fine sons and daughters, yet justice to the accused compelled him to come forward, and offer a few

words in extenuation of the punishment, if any, which should be inflicted for their illeged misdeeds. "First, then," he asked, "was it possible that they, the men then present, should be angry or offended at seeing one of their own race and religion spring up from among them, and take his station with the best of the Cromwellian Shoneens that surrounded and oppressed them? And when he did so spring up, was it any blame to him to avail himself of every means which *The Law* allowed him to maintain his elevation, though it might be by standing on the shoulders and necks of as good fellows as himself? What had Mr. Boland done but what others had been doing for ages, and were doing still? As for the matter of tithes, sure they should be paid to the minister who they never saw nor cared to see, and if Mr. Boland had profit on them, so much the better, because the less tithe that went into the absent minister's pocket the more would they all be pleased. To be sure the tithe-proctor always exacted to the last farthing, and more than the minister—and it is believed that Mr. Boland was not behind any of the trade—and some people say, indeed, that, from his knowledge of farming and the ins and outs of people's little tillage, he sometimes exacted to within a trifle of one-fifth of the produce. Indeed, in my own case—and I am but a poor brogue-maker, with half-a-dozen acres of the poorest lands of F———,—he took from me, between citations to the Bishop's Court and other costs, with the original tithes, at least one-fourth of the entire produce of my little farm; nor do I know any one in the parish that fares better than myself, especially the poor people who don't understand the law, and who are not able, or willing, to get into it. However, I confess, I never regretted my own share of the loss, when I knew and thought that it all went to the glory and grandeur of the Masters and Misses Boland. Nor shall I ever forget the cutting-up which young Mick Boland gave me, with the butt-end of his loaded whip, the day I went to their house to complain that their driver had put all my sheep into the pound, for a debt of sixteen shillings, tithe-money. And now, my Lord Justice, as I have said so much of the truth in favor of Mr. Boland and his family, I hope your lordship will pass a merciful and just sentence on them, and that this just jury won't find these friends to us, to our religion, and to our country, guilty.

There was a suppressed murmur of approbation, accompanied by an audible stamping of feet, at the conclusion of this merciful harangue. But silence being called, the jurors put their heads together across the table, and in less than two minutes their foreman handed up the issue-paper to the secretary, who sat by the side of the judge, on receipt of which that functionary arose, and in a solemn, scarcely audible voice, read from the paper a verdict of "guilty" against Michael Boland and his two sons. The judge then immediately arose from his chair, and in a low, solemn, but firm and distinct tone of voice, pronounced the verdict of the court to be, "Death and Dark Destruction to Michael Boland and his two sons," and that the sentence should be executed that very night. On the announcement of the verdict a low shriek of exultation arose from the audience, followed by a simultaneous half-suppressed cry of, "Long life to our Judge! Long life to Buck English!"

The judge stood up again and said: "Now, boys, I know that there is no man here present but a man who has been often well tried in exploits of danger and of death: every man of you is the leader of a party of brave fellows, who, with yourselves, have sworn to sustain the oppressed, crush the tyrant, and right the wronged. Your men are brave, bold, and hearty; keep them to their duty, and in perfect submission to your orders. Let the old tyrant and his young cubs be cut off, at all hazards, but spare the women—nay, make every possible exertion to save them, but, more especially, and by all means, let the eldest daughter, Miss Anna, be saved, secured, and brought to me, as you all know how long I have vainly endeavored to make her mine. And now, boys, every man to his post, and I, your commander, shall lead you on."

Buck English is a real character—his real name was Ryan, and he had been respectably reared, but gave himself up to the intoxicating excitement of the French Revolution—he also fought in '98, and subsequently, for his intelligence and daring spirit, became the leader of all the lawless and disaffected parties in his native County of Limerick, and, indeed, of all Munster.

The parties within the old ruin now made their appearance on the hill, and every man of them going to the head of his own body, they marched first to Hospital, a contiguous village, where they boldly beat a drum, the sound of which called up, as by enchantment, such a concourse of armed men as frightened the parties themselves. They marched from that, westwards, to Knockany, where they dug up several extensive fields (of grass) belonging to Mr. O'Grady. They marched on then, in the same direction, towards the residence of the Bolands, their numbers increasing as they went along, by voluntary and involuntary parties.

The Bolands, ever on the watch, soon learned that they were to be visited that night by those parties whom they had so long defied, but they never calculated that they should be attacked by such a strong force as they now learned was approaching them—for it is believed that the actual number could not have been less than five thousand men, contributed by the Counties of Limerick, Clare, Kerry, Cork, Waterford, Tipperary, and Kilkenny.

However, they were not daunted, but immediately put themselves in order of battle. They first sent out (off their premises) all their servants, men and women, lest there should be a spy or a traitor among them. They then carried up all their arms and ammunition to the top floor of their (two-story, long, thatched) house. The father and the younger son planted themselves at one of the windows facing the front. The elder son and the family tutor, a young man of the neighborhood, who would not abandon them in their hour of danger, took their stand at the window which looked directly at the narrow strong door of the wall which inclosed the house. The two daughters, with their mother, took up their places between the two windows, under cover of the wall, and having been well practiced for some weeks previous, stood prepared to load and hand up the arms to their heroes when the occasion should arrive. About the hour of one o'clock in the morning, the barking of dogs, and an odd random shot, gave the Bolands certain and unmistakable notice that their hour of terror was at hand. And soon they could hear a monotonous sound of moving feet and suppressed voices, under the outer walls of their fortress. A horn was then sounded, and the besieged were called upon to open their gates and surrender at discretion. But no answer was received from within, where all was total darkness and apparent inactivity. Several attempts were now made to burst the strong yard door, but without effect. The assailants then began to fire at the thatch of the dwelling house, as well as on the out-offices, with the intent of setting them in flames; and after several attempts, they ultimately succeeded in igniting the thatch of a detached cow-house, which stood out from the other buildings, and the wind, unfortunately happening to blow from that quarter to the other offices, carried the fire to them, by which they were soon in a blaze. In the meantime, they procured two sledges from a neighboring forge, with which they assaulted the yard door, which they soon broke in. Now there was a dead pause on the part of the assailants—for they knew very well, that to pass on the threshold of this door was certain death. However, the pressure from the rear was so great, that suddenly several men were involuntarily pushed in through the doorway. And now the work of death commenced, for no sooner had the first batch been pressed in, than there was such a well-directed shower of bullets poured out on them from four well-charged blunderbusses, as levelled every man of them with the earth. A moment's pause ensued, and the door was again filled with new aspirants for "fame in the cannon's mouth," who, however, fared as badly as the preceding batch. During this time the assailing party had been busy with crowbars and other instruments, in making several breaches in the yard walls. At length they succeeded in opening entrances in three different places at the same time, and thus in a few minutes several hundred men were precipitated into the yard. And now commenced the work of death in earnest. The assailants were shot down in scores, while the upper windows of the house, from which the deadly firing was so ably kept up, received fifty discharges to the one that issued from them. The house was immediately surrounded, and guards of chosen faithful men were placed at its doors and lower windows, with strict orders to let no one, especially the "old fox," escape, with the exception only of the women.

To add to the dreadful condition of the Bolands, the assailants had now succeeded in igniting the thatch of the dwelling-house, and it was immediately in a blaze. The Bolands and their tutor, ably served by their mother and sisters, still continued to deal death and destruction on the parties outside, without being yet fatigued or disabled. But at length the upper floor became too hot, and the old man, with his wife and daughters, retreated to the lower floor. The brothers and the tutor, however, remained above, but doing less execution, because, when the assailants saw the house on fire, they retreated outside the yard wall, excepting the guard who were placed round the house, and these stood so close to the walls that the party above had not power of injuring them, without fully exposing their own persons at the windows.

While both parties were thus in a fearful state of suspense, the burning roof of the house fell in on the three young men above, and immediately buried them for ever in its destructive flames. The assailing crowds set up a terrific shout of triumph. The floor above now began to crackle, and so dense was the smoke below, that the old man and the women were in a state little short of suffocation. At last the Proctor became des-

perate, and opening one of the ground windows, and taking his poor wife by the hand, he attempted to throw himself and her out through it. No sooner, however, had they appeared at the window, than the old man was riddled with bullets from without, and thrown back into the now blazing room from which he had been endeavoring to escape.

The three young men and the old man being now destroyed, a voice in the rear of the crowd called out, in a fierce commanding tone, to rescue the women at all hazards, whereupon the sledges were applied to the front door of the house; but while they were thus engaged, the young women unbarred the back door, and rushing out with their mother, uttering the most piercing shrieks, they ran into a stable which was near, before they could be laid hold of. Here, however, the two daughters were immediately seized on by order of the commander of the siege, Buck English, and carried out, but not violently, until they came to the stable-door, where the eldest daughter laid hold of the iron bolt staple of the door-post, and so desperately did she hold it, that she did not let it go till her shoulder was dislocated. They were both carried off then to the Galtee mountains, the usual resort of the *Buck*, who retained the eldest during pleasure. I forget what became of the younger girl, but the other became deranged, and in that melancholy state was subsequently taken into the "protection," as it is called, of a certain banker of Limerick, who shot himself in that city, to my own knowledge, in 1815. * * *

The scene at the residence of the Bolands, on the morning after the attack, was truly horrifying. The remains of the four men, almost burned to cinders, were dug out of the still burning ruins, nor was the spectacle in the yard and on the neighboring road less frightful, from the multitude of dead bodies with which they were strewn; for most of their stranger assailants who were killed were left on the spot—the party not choosing to be seen carrying them off by daylight. But such of the people of the neighboring parishes as fell, were carried off by friends and acquaintances, and hid during that day, but buried at night at remote distances from their houses, in the newly-ploughed and in the wheat-sown fields. The inquest, &c., being over, the government and the gentry of the county offered a large reward for any information that would lead to the apprehension or knowledge of the actors, especially the commander, in this fearful tragedy. A strong military force was stationed in the neighborhood, and all the bad and suspicious characters of the district were taken up, and committed to gaol on suspicion. However, the original concocters of the murder made their escape, either to England or to the remote parts of Clare, Kerry, and Cork; whilst terror reigned throughout the whole County of Limerick among the farmers at seeing the numbers that were arrested, and the largeness of the reward.

One morning, as a well-known active magistrate of the county was sitting at his breakfast, a strange woman came to his door, and requested to see him on business of importance. He immediately called up two of his servant men, and ordered them to go to the door and see that the woman was really a woman, and that she had no arms about her. This was soon done, and the woman, a real one, was ushered into his worship's presence. She then told him—the room being first cleared of all other people—that she was the wife of D—— A——, the brogue-maker of F——, that her husband was an honest, industrious man, who knew his own trade and business well, and who knew a great deal about the business of other people, too, and of what was going on in the country—that he was a man of upright and Christian principles, who would always feel it a conscientious duty to aid the laws of his country to preserve social order and punish crime—that he was not a man to be terrified or bribed by any amount of punishment or reward; but that if he were *properly managed and kindly treated*, he might be found able to give a good deal of useful information.

His worship had the *good-natured* poor woman taken good care of for that day—and at a late hour of the same night he took and put her comfortably sitting on a horse, behind one of his constables, and, surrounded by a strong military body, horse and foot, marched her in safety, she showing the way to her own house. They found honest Darby sitting by his fire, reading his prayer-book, and in great grief at the unaccountable absence of his wife. He was dreadfully agitated when he found himself arrested, and strongly protested that he was an honest, industrious tradesman, who knew nothing of the wickedness of the world; and wondered much what this was all about.

His worship advised him to be calm—that all should be well, but that he should accompany himself to his house. After Darby had spent several usefully employed days with his new friend, he was transmitted to Limerick gaol, with orders that he should be well treated, and be allowed to see his wife as often as she desired it. The wife soon found that it would be more convenient for her, and perhaps somewhat safer, to be living near her husband, and therefore went to reside in Limerick. The news of Darby's

arrest caused no little alarm through the county, and it was soon whispered about that persons were now arrested, of whose participation in the Boland affair no human being could give any hint except himself alone. His wife's rooms became crowded every day with the wives, daughters, and sisters of the men arrested,—and others not arrested, or suspected by any living being—money in hundreds of pounds was poured into her lap to purchase the ignorance, the silence, or the perjury of Darby—and every one went away apparently satisfied with Darby's promises through his faithful wife.

The assizes came down at last. Darby lost all recollection of any money but the large public reward, and on that occasion over twenty men were hanged chiefly on his evidence—though it was very difficult for the crown counsel to bring the poor reluctant man to the point; but when he *did* make a *convicting* admission, he took care that it should be a clincher, wrung from him, as he wished it to appear, by a cunning counsel. The gallows at Limerick continued for years after to be fed by Darby with victims for this crime; and several hundred were transported, or went into voluntary banishment on account of this fearful butchery. The writer of this knew well, and was at school with the secretary of the Court of Kilteely Hill.

CHAPTER I.

The Chapel Green of Esker Dearg.

The chapel of *Esker Dearg*, or the Red Ridge, was situated in a rich and well-cultivated country, that for miles about it literally teemed with abundance. The Red Ridge under which it stood was one of those long eminences, almost, if not altogether, peculiar to Ireland. It was, as the name betokens, a prolonged elevation that ran for nearly a mile and a half in a north-eastern direction without appearing to yield to, or be influenced by, the natural position or undulations of the country through which it went. The epithet of red which was attached to it, originated, according to popular tradition, in a massacre which had taken place upon it during one of the Elizabethan wars. Others imputed it to a cause much more obvious and natural, viz., its peculiar appearance during all seasons of the year, owing to the parched and barren nature of the soil, which, in consequence of its dry and elevated position, was covered only with furze and fern, or thin, short grass that was parched by the sun into a kind of red-brown color.

Under that end of this Esker which pointed nearest to the south-west, stood the chapel we have just mentioned. It was a rather long building with double gables and a double roof, perfectly plain, and with no other ornament, either inside or out, if we except a marble cross that stood against the wall upon the altar, of which the good priest was not a little vain, inasmuch as it had been of his own procuring. A public road of course ran past it, or rather skirted the green unenclosed space, by which, in common with most country edifices, it was surrounded. Another road joined that which we have mentioned, within a few perches of it, so that it stood at what might be nearly considered a cross-road. One or two large trees grew beside it, which gave to its otherwise simple appearance something of picturesque effect, especially during the summer months, when they were thickly covered with leaves, and waved and rustled in the sun to the refreshing breezes of that delightful season.

It was Sunday in the early part of March—we will not name the year—when our story commences. The Red Ridge Chapel was as usual surrounded by the greater portion of the congregation that had assembled to hear Mass. Within its walls there were only a few classes of youngsters, male and female, formed into circles, learning their catechism from the schoolmaster of the neighborhood, the clerk, or some devotee who possessed education enough to qualify himself for that kind office. Here and there in different parts of the chapel were small groups of adult persons, more religiously disposed than the rest, engaged in saying the rosary, whilst several others were performing solitary devotions, some stationary in a corner of the chapel, and others going the circuit around its walls in the performance of the Fourteen Stations of the Cross. Now, all these religious and devotional acts take place previous to the arrival of the priest, and are suspended the moment he commences Mass; into the more sublime majesty of which they appear, as it were, to lose themselves and be absorbed.

The great body of the congregation, however, until the clergyman makes his appearance, are to be found outside, on what is called the Chapel Green. Here they stand in groups, engaged in discussing the topics of the day, or such local intelligence as may interest them; and it is to one of those groups that we now beg to call the attention of our readers.

Under the larger of the two trees we have described stood a circle of the country people, listening to, and evidently amused by,

the conversation of an individual whose bearing and appearance we must describe at great length.

He was a person whom at first sight you would feel disposed to class with young men. In other words, you might be led, from the lively flow of his spirits and his peculiarly buoyant manner, to infer that he had not gone beyond thirty or thirty-five. Upon a closer inspection, however, you could easily perceive that his countenance, despite of its healthy hue, was a good deal wrecked and weatherbeaten, and gave indications of those traces, which not only a much longer period of time, but deep and violent passions, seldom fail to leave behind them. His features were regular, and at first glance seemed handsome, but upon a nearer approach you were certain to find that their expression was heartless and disagreeable. They betokened no symptom of humanity of feeling, but were lit up with a spirit of harsh and reckless levity, which, whilst it made him popular with the unthinking multitude, might have been easily understood as the accompaniment, if not the direct exponent, of a bad and remorseless heart. The expression of his mouth was at the same time both hard and wanton, and his eyes, though full of a lively lustre, resembled in their brightness those of a serpent or hyena. His forehead was constructive but low, and, we may say, rather unintellectual than otherwise. He was without whiskers, a circumstance which caused a wound on the back part of his jaw to be visible, and one-half of the left-hand little finger had been shot off in defence of his church and country, according to his own account. This was a subject however, upon which he always affected a good deal of mystery when conversing with the people, or we should say, he took care to throw out such oracular insinuations of what he had suffered in their defence, as, according to their opinion, almost constituted him a martyr. In size he was somewhat above the middle height, compact, and exceedingly well built. His chest was deep and his shoulders powerful, whilst his limbs were full of muscular strength and great activity.

Having thus given a portrait of his person, it only remains that we describe his costume as he appeared on the Sunday in question, and we do so because it may be right to inform our readers, in the outset, that one of his peculiarities was a habit of seldom appearing, for any lengthened period, in the same dress, or indeed in the same locality.

On this occasion he had on a pair of tight buckskin breeches, top-boots and spurs—for he mostly went on horseback—a blue body-coat, with bright gilt buttons, a buff cassimere waistcoat, and a very fashionable hat. The cravat he wore was of green silk, and was tied in a knot, which might be understood by the initiated as one that entitled him to their confidence and respect. Our readers may not be surprised at this, for, unfortunately so high and bitter have party prejudices and feelings in our disturbed country run, that the very dress has been often forced to become symbolic of their spirit and existence.

The chapel green, as we have said, was covered by the great bulk of the peasantry who were waiting the arrival of the priest. Here was a circle in which stood some rustic politician, who, having had an opportunity of getting a glimpse at some newspaper of the day, was retailing its contents to a greedy circle of listeners about him. There again stood some well-known story-teller, or perhaps a live old *senachie*, reciting wild and stirring legends to his particular circle. Some were stretched indolently on the grass, or lying about the ditches in the adjoining fields, but by far the greatest and most anxious crowd was assembled under the tree against which Buck English—for by this name was he known—leaned. We should say here, however, that he was not called Buck English, because his name was English, but in consequence of his attempts at pronouncing the English tongue in such a manner as he himself considered peculiarly elegant and fashionable. The man's education was very limited, indeed he had scarcely received any, but he was gifted at the same time with a low vulgar fluency of language which he looked upon as a great intellectual gift, and which, in his opinion, wanted nothing but "tip-top prononsensation," as he termed it, to make it high-flown and gentlemanly.

Our friend "the Buck," as he was universally called, was no sooner perceived in his usual station under the tree than there was a rapid gathering of the assembled crowd to hear him.

"Hallo, Paddy! what's the matther? where are you goin' to in sich a hell of a hurry?"

"Blood alive! man, sure Buck English is at his post to-day."

"How at his post?"

"Why under the three where he always is when he comes here af a Sunday."

"Hut! sure I know that; come, begad, let us hear him."

"Faith, it's he that's up to the outs and ins of everything. Sure the Counsellor himself made mintion of him in a great speech some time ago. It seems the Buck sent him up five pounds in a letther, and the Counsellor read the letther, and said it came from a most respectable gentleman, a friend of his, one Barney—no, not Barney—it wasn't Bar-

ney he called him, but—but—let me see—ay, begad—Bir—Birnard—ay, one Birnard English, Esquire, from the Barony of Treena Heela; bekaise, as the Buck doesn't keep himself very closely to any particular place of livin', he dated his letther, I suppose, from the Barony at large."

"At any rate one thing's clear, that he's high up wid the Counsellor, an' if he wasn't one man in ten thousand he wouldn't be that."

They had now reached the tree, and found that, short as the time was, a considerable crowd had already assembled about him, so that they were obliged to stand pretty far out in the circle. One or two young men, sons of most respectable farmers—for it somehow happened that the Buck was no great favorite with the seniors—stood, or rather had the honor of standing, within the circle, for the purpose of "houldin' conversation wid him;" for it could not reasonably be supposed that the Buck could throw away such valuable political information and high-flown English upon mere boors, who were incapable of understanding either the one or the other.

"And so, Mr. English," said one of those whom he had brought within the circle, "you think the established church, the great heresy of Luther, will go down at last?"

"Think it, Tom—why, if you get me a book I'll swear it, and that's better than thinking any dee. Didn't Emencipation pess? answer me that."

"Begad it did so, sir,"—from the crowd.

"Well," proceeded the Buck, "what doubt or hesiteetion can there be that the seem power and authority that riz our own church won't be keepable of puttin' down the great protesting heresy?"

"See that now," from the crowd; "begad it stands to raison sure enough."

"Certingly," he proceeded, "none whatsomever; but then the question is, how can it be effectualized?"

The crowd—"Begad, and so it is."

"Well, my friends, it isn't at oll difficult to determine that particularity: you oll know that a men lives by food—very well; pleece that men in a persition where he can't procure food and the nethrel kensiquence is that he must die. Eh—ha! ha! ha!—do you kimprehind?"

"Not a doubt of it," replied Mr. Crowd; "but sure, at any rate, we *will* kimprehend it by-an'-by."

"Very well; take the protesting church or the parsons, for it is oll the seem—deprive them of the mains of support, that is to see, deny them their tithes—don't pay a shilling—hold out to the death, as my friend the Counsellor—great O'Connell says—and as we oll say, practice passive resistance, then you know the establishment must stirve and die of femine and distitootion, as a contributive jidgment for its sins."

Crowd—"Blood alive, isn't that great!"

"What is it?" from the other circle.

"Why, that the parsons, an' all belonging to them, is to die of family prostitution for their sins!"

"Devil's cure to them, then, for they desarve it—at least many of them does, anyhow," says one segment.

"Faith, an' I don't know that either," says another segment. "The parsons, bad as they're spoken of, was, for the most part, willin' to live among us; and, begad, you all know that they're kind friends and good neighbors, an' that the money they get out of the parish comes back into the parish agin—not all as one as absentee landlords. They give employment as far as they're able, an' thar's no doubt but their wives and daughters does a great dale of good among the poor, and so, begad, does the parsons themselves often."

"Who is that wiseecre that spoke last?" asked the Buck; "if I don't misteek he leebors with Dennis Purcel, the procter."

"Ay, an' a very good masther he is," replied the spokesman of the segment; "gives plenty of employment anyhow—although the pay's no great shakes—an' that's more than some that abuses him does."

"There's no one aboosin' him here, my good friend, so don't imegine it—at leest I should be extremely sorry to do so. I respect himself and his family in a very elevated manner, I assoore you. An' what's more, my friend, I'll thank you to report to him that I said so."

Here he looked significantly among the mob, especially as he perceived that the man's eyes were not fixed upon him whilst he spoke, and having thrust his tongue into his cheek, half in derision, and half as it were by a natural action, he succeeded at all events in creating a general laugh; but so easily is a laugh, among such an audience, created, that it is not altogether within our power or penetration to determine the point which occasioned their mirth, unless it were the grimace with which his words were accompanied—or stay—perhaps it was the strong evil odor in which Purcel, the subject of their conversation, must have been held.

"Talk of the devil, Mr. English," replied a stern voice from the listeners, "and he will appear; look down the road there and you'll see Purcel himself an' his family drivin' to mass on the *sweat* and *groans* of the people!"

"Not all of them," replied another voice,

in a different tone; "there's only himself, his wife, and their two spankin' daughters, upon the jauntin' car; but, blood alive, look at the sons! Devil so purty a lot of sweat and groans I seen this twelvemonth as the two is riding on, in the shape of a pair of blood-horses, so that you may put the *blood*, Barney, along wid the *sweat* and the *groans*, agra. Well done, tithes!—ha! ha! ha!"

The individual laugh that accompanied these last observations was cruel, revolting, and hideous. The Buck sought out the speaker among the crowd, and gave him first a nod of approval, and almost instantly afterward added, with a quick change of countenance, but not until he perceived that this double expression was pretty generally understood—

"Don't, my friend—if they get wealthy and proud upon our groans and tears an' blood, as you say, it is not their invalidity that makes them do so, but ours. Instead of being cruel to them it is to ourselves we are cruel; for by peeing the aforeseed tithes we are peeing away our heart's blood, an' you know that if we are the fools to pee that way, small bleeme to them if they take it in the shape of good passable cash. They—meening sich men as Purcel—are only the instruments with which the parsons work."

"Ay," replied the stern voice, "but, in case we had the country to ourselves, do you think now, Buck darlin', that when we'd settle off the jidges, an' lawyers, an' sheriffs, an' bailiffs, that we'd allow the jails or the gibbets to stan', or the hangmen to live. No, by japers, we'd make a clane sweep of it; and when sich a man as Purcel becomes a tool in the parsons' hands to grind the people, I don't see that we ought to make fish of one an' flesh of the other."

"Ah, Darby Hourigan, is that you?" exclaimed the Buck; "well, although I don't exaggerate with your severity, yet I will shake hands with you. How do you do Darby? Darby, I think you're a true petriot—but, so far as Mr. Purcel is concirned, I wish you to understand that he is a particular friend of mine, and so is every mimber of his family."

"Faith, an' Mr. Buck, it's more than you are with them, I can tell you."

"But perhaps you are a little misteeken there, Mr. Hourigan," replied the Buck, with a swagger, whilst he raised his head and pulled up the collar of his shirt at both sides, with a great deal of significant self-consequence;—"perhaps you are—I see so, that's oll. Perhaps, I repeat, there is some win mimber of that family not presupposed aginst me, Mr. Hourigan?"

"Well, may be so," replied the other; "but if it be so, it's of late it must have happened, that's what *I* say."

Hourigan, who was by trade a shoemaker, was also a small farmer; but, sooth to say, a more treacherous or ferocious-looking ruffian you could not possibly meet with in a province. He was spare and big-boned, slouchy and stealthy in his gait, pale in face, with dark, heavy brows that seemed to have been kept from falling into his deep and down-looking eyes only by an effort. His cheek-bones stood out very prominently, whilst his thin, pallid cheeks fell away so rapidly as to give him something the appearance of the resuscitated skeleton of a murderer, for never in the same face were the kindred spirits of murder and cowardice so hideously blended.

Much more dialogue of the description just detailed took place, in which the proctor was not without defenders; but at the same time, as we are bound to record nothing but truth, we are compelled to say, that the majority of the voices were fearfully against him. If, however, he, the proctor and the instrument, had but few to support him, what must we not suppose the defence of the system in all its bearings to have been?

At length, as Purcel and his family approached, the conversation was transferred from the political to the personal, and he, his wife, and his children, received at the hands of the people that satirical abuse, equally unjust and ungenerous, which an industrious family, who have raised themselves from poverty to independence, are in general certain to receive from all those who are deficient in the virtues by which the others rose.

"Ay, there he comes now, ridin' on his jauntin' car, an' does he think that we all forget the time when he went wid his basket undher his arm, wid his half-a-crown's worth of beggarly hardware in it. He begun it as a brat of a boy, an' was called nothin' then but *Mahon na gair* (that is "Mat of the grin"); but, by-and-by, when he came to have a pack over the shoulder, and to carry a yard wan' he began to turn Bodagh on our hands. Felix, it's himself that soon thought to set up for the style an' state."

"At any rate," said the friendly voice aforesaid, "no one can deny but he's a good employer—if he'd give better wages."

"A good employer!" said Hourigan; "we all know he must get his work done—small thanks to him for that, an' a small price he pays for it."

"We all know the ould proverb," said another individual; "set a beggar on horseback, an' he'll ride to the devil. Whist! here they come."

As the last person concluded, Purcel and

the female portion of his family drew up under the shadow of the tree already alluded to, which here overhung the road, so that he came right in contact with the crowd.

"Ah, boys," said he, with his characteristic good-humor, "how are you all? Darby Hourigan, how are your family? Isn't this glorious weather, boys?"

"Blessed weather, sir," replied Hourigan, who became in some degree spokesman. "I hope your honor an' the mistress, sir, an' the young ladies is all well."

"My honor, as you are pleased to call me, was never better in my life; as for the mistress and the young ladies there they are, so judge for yourself, Darby: but, Darby, my good friend, you have a d—d sneaking, slavish way with you. Why do you call me 'your honor' when you know—for I've often told you—that I wouldn't bear it? Am I not one of yourselves? and don't most of you know that I began the world upon half-a-crown, and once carried a hardware basket on my arm?—d—n it, then, speak like a man to a man, and not like a slave, as I'm half inclined to think you are."

"Throth, sir," replied Hourigan, with an indescribable laugh, "an' for all that you say, there's many that gets the title of 'your honor' that doesn't desarve it *as well.*"

"As well, man! Why, there's many a man gets it that doesn't desarve it *at all*, which is saying more than you said—ha! ha! ha!"

Whilst this little dialogue took place, our worthy Buck had abandoned his place under the tree, and flown to the car to assist the ladies off—a piece of attention not unobserved by Purcel, who obliquely kept his eye upon that worthy's gallantry, and the reception it was getting from the parties to whom it was offered.

"Leedies," said the Buck, in his politest manner and language, "will you allow me the gallantry to help you off? Mrs. Purcel, I hope you're well. Here, ma'am, aveel yourself of me."

"Thank you, Mr. English; I'm much obliged," she returned, rather coolly.

"Leedies," he proceeded, flying to the other side, "allow me the gallantry."

The two young women, who were full of spirits and good humor, were laughing most heartily, *sub silentio*, at the attention thus so ceremoniously paid to their mother by a man whom, beyond all human beings, she detested. Now, however, that he came to proffer his "gallantry" to themselves, they were certainly rather hard pressed to maintain or rather regain their gravity.

"Leedies," the Buck continued, "may I have the gallantry to help you off?"

"Oh, thank you, it's too much trouble, Mr. English."

"None on airth, Miss Purcel—do let me have the high-flown satisfaction."

"Oh, well," she replied, "since you will be so polite," and giving him her hand she was about to go down, when suddenly withdrawing it, as if recollecting herself, she said, nodding with comic significance toward her sister Julia—"My sister, Mr. English, have you no gallantry for *her?*"

"Ah," he whispered, at the same time gratefully squeezing her hand, "you're a first-rate divinity—a tip-top goddess—divil a thing else. Miss Joolia, may I presoome for to have the plisure and polite gallantry to help you off the car; 'pon honor it'll be quite grateful and prejudicial to my feelings—it will, I assoore you!"

"Bless me, whose is that wedding party, Mr. English?" asked Miss Julia, pointing to the opposite direction of the road.

English instantly turned round to observe, when, by a simultaneous act, both sisters stepped nimbly from the car. Miss Julia, as if offended, but at the same time with a comic gravity of expression, exclaimed—

"Oh, fie! Mr. English, is that your boasted gallantry? I'm afraid your eight years' residence in England, however it may have improved the elegance of your language and accent, hasn't much improved your politeness!"

So saying, she and her sister tripped off to the chapel, which they immediately entered. Much about the same time their brothers arrived, mounted, certainly, upon a pair of magnificent hunters, and having handed them over to two lads to be walked about until the conclusion of Mass, they also entered the chapel, for the priest was not now more than three or four hundred yards distant.

The jest practised so successfully upon our friend the Buck occasioned a general laugh at his expense, a circumstance which filled him with serious mortification, if not with actual resentment, for it so happened, that one of his great foibles was such a morbid sensibility to ridicule as was absolutely ludicrous.

"Bedad, Mr. English, you wor fairly done there; in spite o' the tall English, you're no match for the ladies. Miss Julia fairly gev' you the bag to hould."

The Buck's eye glittered with bitterness.

"Miss *Julia*, do you say?" he replied; "why, my good friend, the girl was christened *Judy*—plain Judy; but now that they've got into high-flown life, you persave, nothing will sarve them but to ape their betthers. However, never mind, I'll see the

day yet, and that before long, when saucy Judy won't refuse my assistance. Time about's fair play, you know."

It may be observed here, that Buck English happened to forget himself, which he almost always did whenever he became in earnest: he also forgot his polite language and peculiar elegance of pronunciation.

To a vain and weak mind there is nothing more cutting than the consciousness of looking mortified in the eyes of others, and under these circumstances to feel that the laugh is against you, adds one not important item to "the miseries of human life."

The Buck, now that the priest was at the chapel door, walked, with a stride that very much resembled the mock-heroic, towards the place of worship; but, in the opinion of the shrewd spectators, his dignity was sadly tarnished by the humorous contempt implied in the practical jest that had been so adroitly played off at his expense.

CHAPTER II.

The Proctor's Principles and His Family.

For a considerable time previous to the scene described in our last chapter, a principle of general resistance to tithes had been deepening in and spreading over the country. Indeed the opposition to them had, for at least half a century before, risen up in periodical ebullitions that were characterized by much outrage and cruelty. On this account, then, it was generally necessary that the residence of that unpopular functionary, the tithe-proctor, should be always one of considerable strength, in order the more successfully to resist such midnight attacks as hostile combination might make upon it. Purcel, as well as other proctors of his day, had from time to time received threatening notices, not only of a personal nature, but also of premeditated attacks upon his house. The man was, however, not only intrepid and resolute, but cautious and prudent; and whilst he did not suffer himself to be intimidated by threats that for the most part ended in nothing, he took care to keep himself and his family well provided against any attack that might be made upon them.

The history of Matthew Purcel is soon told. It is that of enterprise, perseverance, and industry, tinged a good deal by a sharp insight into business, a worldly spirit, and although associated with a good deal of pride and display, an uncontrollable love of putting money together, not always under circumstances that were calculated to render him popular, nor which could, in point of feeling or humanity, be at all defended. He had commenced the world, as has been already intimated, in character of a hardware pedlar. From stage to stage of that circulating life he advanced until he was able to become a stationary shopkeeper in the town of C——m. The great predilection of his heart, however, was for farming, and in pursuance with his wishes on this subject, he took a large farm, and entered upon its management with considerable spirit and a good deal of skill. His success was beyond his expectations; and, as the spirit of agriculture continued to gain upon him, he gradually lost his relish for every other description of business. He consequently gave up his large shop in C——m, and went to reside upon his farm, with a capital of some thousands, which he owed to the industry of his previous life. Here he added farm to farm, until he found himself proprietor of nearly six hundred acres, with every prospect of adding largely to his independence and wealth.

It was now that his capacity as a man peculiarly well acquainted with the value of land, and of agricultural produce in general, induced him to accept of offers in connection with the collection of tithe, which were a good deal in accordance with his ability and habits. In short, he became a tithe-proctor, and in the course of a few years rented tithes himself to a very large amount.

Such is the brief history of Matthew Purcel, at the period when he makes his appearance upon our humble stage; and it only remains that we add a few particulars with regard to his family. Out of eleven children only four survived—two sons and two daughters—all of whom were exceedingly well educated, the latter accomplished. Purcel's great object in life was more to *establish a family* than to secure the individual happiness of his children. This was his ambition—the spirit which prompted him, in his dealings with the people, to forget too frequently that the garb of justice may be often thrown over the form of rapacity, and that the authority of law is also, in too many instances, only another name for oppression.

It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to find in their native province four such children as called him father. His two sons were, in symmetry of figure, strength, courage, manly beauty, and gentlemanly bearing, almost unrivalled. They possessed the manners of gentlemen, without any of that offensive coxcombry on the one side, or awkward affectation of ease on the other, which generally mark the upstart. In fact, although

they understood their own worth, and measured their intellectual powers and acquirements successfully with those of rank and birth, they had sense enough to feel that it would have been ridiculous in them to affect by their conduct the *prestige* of either; and they consequently knew that both discrimination and delicacy were necessary in enabling them to assume and maintain that difficult bearing in society, which prevented them from encroaching on the one side or giving up their proper position on the other. So far so good. Their characters, however, were not without some deep shadows. Whilst we acknowledge that they were generous, resolute, liberal, and full of courage, we must also admit that they were warm, thoughtless, and a good deal overbearing to many, but by no means to all, of the peasantry with whom they came in contact. From the ample scale on which their farming was conducted, and in consequence of the vast number of men they necessarily had occasion to employ, they could not but detect among them many instances both of falsehood, dishonesty, and ingratitude. These vices at their hands never received any favor. So far from that, those whom they detected in the commission of them, were instantly turned adrift, very often after having received a sound horse-whipping. Much abuse also occurred between them and the country people with reference to land, and especially tithes, in which they gave back word for word, and too frequently met concealed or implied threats either by instant chastisement or open defiance; the result of all was, as the reader may perceive, that they had the worst and least scrupulous, and consequently, most dangerous class of persons in the country for their enemies. The name of the elder was John, and the younger Alick; and, soothe to say, two finer-looking, more spirited, or determined young fellows could not be found probably in the kingdom.

The relative position, then, in which they and the people, or rather the worst class of them, stood to each other, and the bitter disparaging taunts and observations with which the proctor and his sons were treated, not only on the chapel green, but almost wherever they appeared, are now, we trust, intelligible to the reader.

Of the daughters, Mary and Julia, we have not so much to observe. They were both very beautiful; and, as we have already said, highly accomplished. Both, too, were above the middle height and size, and remarkable for the singular elegance and symmetry of their figures. Mary, the eldest, was a dark beauty, with a neck and bosom like snow, and hair black as the raven's wing; whilst Julia, on the contrary, was fair, and if possible, more exquisitely rounded than her sister. Her eyes, of a blue gray, were remarkable for an expression of peculiar depth and softness, whilst Mary's dark brown were full at once of a mellow and penetrating light. In other respects they resembled each other very much, both being about the same height and size, and altogether of a similar bearing and figure. Mary's complexion was evidently inherited from her mother, who was, at the opening of our narrative, a black-haired, handsome woman, with a good deal of determination about her mouth and brow, but with a singularly benevolent expression when she smiled. She, too, had received a good, plain education, and was one of those naturally well-mannered women who, whilst they are borne forward into greater respectability by the current of prosperity, can assume, without effort, the improved tone of better society to which they are raised.

There were few women in her sphere of life, or indeed in any sphere of life, who dispensed more good to the poor and distressed than Mrs. Purcel; and in all her kindness and charities she was most cordially aided and supported by her admirable daughters. Within a wide circle around her dwelling, sickness and destitution, or unexpected calamity, were ever certain to be cheered by the benevolent hand of herself or her daughters. The latter, indeed, had latterly relieved her, in a great degree, if not altogether, of all her distant and out-door charities, so that little now was left to her management but the claims of such poor as flocked for assistance to the house.

Mass having been concluded, and the benediction given in the chapel of Red Ridge, Mr. Purcel and his family soon appeared among the crowd on the green, preparing to return home. The car was driven up opposite the chapel door, to the place where they were in the habit of waiting for it. The two brothers came out along with their sisters, and signed to the lads who had been holding their horses to bring them up. In the meantime, Buck English, unabashed by the rebuff he had received, once more approached, and just as the car had come up, tendered his gallantry—as he called it—with his usual politeness.

"I trust, leedies, that as you were not kindescending enough to let me have the gallantry of helping you off, you will let me have the pleasure of helping you on?"

"That lady behind you appears to have prior claims upon you, Mr. English."

"Behind me!" he exclaimed, turning about. "Why, Miss Joolia, there's no leddy behind me."

In the meantime she beckoned to her brother who, while the proctor was assisting his wife to take her seat, helped up both the girls, who nodding to the Buck, said—

"Thank you, Mr. English: we feel much obliged for your gallant intentions; quite as much, indeed, as if you had carried them into effect."

This joke, so soon played off after that which had preceded it, and upon the same person, too, occasioned another very general laugh at the Buck's expense; and, beyond a doubt, filled him with a double measure of mortification and resentment.

"There you go," he muttered, "and it was well said before Mass, that if you set a beggar on horseback he'll ride to the divil."

"To whom do you apply that language?" asked Alick Purcel.

"To one Michael Purcel, a tithe-proctor, an oppressor and a grinder of the poor," returned Buck, fiercely.

"And, you insolent scoundrel, how dare you use such language to *my* father?" said the other. "I tell you, that if it were not from a reluctance to create an unbecoming quarrel so near the house of God, and so soon after his worship, I would horsewhip you, you illiterate, vulgar rascal, where you stand."

"I would be glad to catch you making the attempt," replied the Buck, with a look of fury; "because I would give you such a lesson as you would never forget. I would let you know that it isn't your father's unfortunate tenants and day-laborers you have before you—and that you scourge like hounds in a kennel."

Purcel was actually in the act of springing at him, whip in hand, when, fortunately, the priest interfered, and prevented a conflict which, from the strength and spirit by which the parties were animated, must have been a fearful one.

"What is this?" said the worthy man; "in God's name, what does this scandalous conduct, in such a place, and on such an occasion, mean? Come between these madmen," he proceeded, addressing the crowd, which had now collected about them. "Keep them asunder."

The two men were separated; but as each felt himself under the influence of strong resentment, they glared at one another with looks of fiery indignation.

"You had better keep out of my way, you impudent scoundrel," said Purcel, shaking his whip at him; "and hark ye, make no more attempts to pay attention to any of my sisters, or, by the heavens above me, I will trace you through all your haunts, and flog you as I would a dog."

"I'll take care to give you the opportunity before long, Squire Purcel, or rather Squireen Purcel," replied the Buck; "and what is more, I'll see you and yours in my power yet."

"You're too ready wid your whip, Mr. Purcel," said several voices from among the crowd; "and you *do* think it's dogs you have to dale wid, as Mr. English says."

"No," said Purcel, with scorn; "I deny it; my whip is never raised unless to the shoulders of some slavish, lying, and dishonest scoundrel, whom I prefer to punish rather than to prosecute."

"Take care it doesn't come aginst you, then, some o' these days," said a voice.

"Ay," added another, "or some o' these nights!"

"Ah, you ungrateful and cowardly crew," he replied, "who have not one drop of manly blood in your veins, I despise you. Like all thorough cowards, you are equally slavish and treacherous. Kindness is thrown away upon you, generosity you cannot understand, for open fight or open resentment you have neither heart nor courage—but give you the hour of midnight, and your unsuspecting victim asleep—or place you behind the shelter of a hedge, where your cowardly person is safe and invisible, with a musket or blunderbuss in your hands, and a man before whom you have crawled in the morning like reptiles, you will not scruple to assassinate that night. Curse upon you! you are a disgrace to any Christian country, and I despise, I say, and defy you. As for you, Buck English, avoid my path, and cross neither me nor any member of my family."

"Alick Purcel," said English, "mark my words—I'll put my thumb upon you and yours yet. I say, mark them; for the day will come when you will remember them to your cost."

Purcel gave him a stern look, and merely said—"I'm prepared for you;" after which he and his brother John mounted their horses and dashed off at a rapid pace towards their father's house, followed by the groans and hootings of the people—far above all whose voices was heard that of Buck English, in loud and contemptuous tones.

On relating the occurrence at home, the father, as was his custom, only laughed at it.

"Pooh, Alick," said he, "what does it signify? Have we not been annoyed for years by these senseless broils and empty threats? Don't think of them."

"I, father!" replied his son; "do you imagine that I ever bestow a second thought upon them? Not I, I assure you. However, there is one thing would most unquestionably gratify me, and that is, an opportunity of

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—*Tithe Proctor*, p. 374.

cudgelling Buck English; because, upon second consideration, horse-whipping would be much too gentlemanly a style of chastisement for such a vulgar and affected ruffian."

"I regret very much, however," said his sister Julia, "that I have been the cause of all this; but really, as Mary here knows, the absurdity of his language was perfectly irresistible."

"Yes," replied her sister; "but, in fact, he is constantly annoying and persecuting her, and very few would bear such nonsense and absurdity from him with so much good-humor as Julia does. I grant that it is very difficult to be angry with so ridiculous a fool; but I do agree with Julia, that it is better to laugh at him, for two reasons: the first is, because he is a fit object for ridicule; and the second, because it is utterly impossible to resist it."

"I don't think he will annoy Julia again, however," said Alick.

"Not until the next opportunity," observed his brother, "when, you may take my word for it, he will be as ridiculously polite and impudent as ever."

"Not a doubt of it," said the father; "the rascal's incurable, and little did I imagine when I asked him once or twice to dine here that I was preparing such an infliction for poor Julia. Julia, didn't he write to you?"

"I certainly had the honor of receiving a very elaborate love-letter from him," replied Julia, laughing, "which I will show you some of these days; but, for my part, I think the fool is beneath resentment, and it is merely on that principle that I have treated him with good-humored contempt."

"He is certainly as good as a farce," said the father; "and if the rascal had kept from making love, I should have still been glad to have him here from time to time to amuse us."

"How does he live at all?" asked Mrs. Purcel; "for, by all accounts, he has no fixed place of residence, nor any known means of support."

"Faith, Nancy, that's a subject upon which we are all aiqually ignorant," replied her husband; "but that the fellow lives, and can live comfortably—ay, and has plenty of money, there can be no earthly doubt. At the same time, that there is much talk about him, and a great deal of mystery too, is a sure case on the other hand. Well, never mind, Jack; I asked your old tutor, M'Carthy, to dine here to-day; he has come home to the country after having gained a scholarship, I believe they call it, in Trinity College."

"I'm glad you did, father," replied John, "and I'm much obliged to you. Yes, he has gained first place, and I knew he would."

"He intends going to the bar, he tells me."

"He will be heard from yet, or I renounce all claims to common sense," replied the other. "There is, unquestionably, a brilliant career before him."

"I would rather, in the meantime," observed Mrs. Purcell, "that he had continued steadfast to his religion. They tell me that he has become a Protestant."

"Why, I believe he couldn't gain a scholarship, as you call it, Jack, without becoming a member of the Established Church."

"No, sir, he could not."

"Well, then," proceeded the proctor, "what great harm? Why, I believe in my soul, that if it weren't for the bigotry of priests and parsons, who contrive to set the two churches together by the ears, there would be found very little difference between them. For my part, I believe a good, honest Protestant will go to heaven when a scoundrel Papist won't, and *vice versa*. The truth is, begad, that it's six of one and half a dozen of the other; and sorry would I be to let so slight a change as passing from one religion to the other ever be a bar to the advancement or good fortune of any one of my children!"

"I would much rather not hear you say so, Mat," replied his wife; "nor do I ever wish my children to gain either wealth or station in the world by the sacrifice of the highest principle that can bind the heart—that of religion."

"Pooh, Nancy, you speak like a woman who never looked beyond the range of the kitchen and larder, or thought beyond the humdrum prayers of your Manual. I wish to see my children *established;* I wish to see them gain station in the world; I wish to make them the first of their family; and I do assure you, Nancy, that it is not such a trifle as the difference between popery on the one hand, and Protestantism on the other, that I'd suffer—that is, if they will be guided by *me*—to stand between them and the solid advantages of good connection, and a proper standing in the world. I say, then, boys and girls, don't be fools; for, as for my part, I scarcely think, to tell God's truth, that there's to the value of sixpence between the two creeds."

"Father," said Mary, laughing, "you're a man of a truly liberal disposition in these matters."

"But, papa," said Julia, with an arch look, "if there be not the value of sixpence between the two creeds, perhaps there is more than that between the two clergy?"

The proctor shook his head and laughed.

"Ah, Judy, my girl, you have me there,"

he replied; "that goes home to the proctor, you baggage. Devil a thing, however, like an endowed church, and may God keep me and all my friends from the *voluntary* system!—ha! ha! ha! Come, now, for that same hit at the old proctor, you must walk over here and play me my old favorite, the 'Cannie Soogah,' just to pull down your pride. The 'Cannie Soogah,' you know, is the Irish for Jolly Pedlar, and a right jolly pedlar your worthy father was once in his days."

"By the way, papa," said Mary, "talking of that—what has become of the pleasant man that goes under that name or nickname—the pedlar that calls here occasionally?"

"I saw him in the market yesterday," replied her father, "and a fine, hale fellow he is of his years. For a man of fifty he's a miracle of activity and energy."

"They say he is wealthy," observed John, "and I shouldn't wonder. *You* ought to give a good guess at that, father—ha! ha! ha!"

"Right, John, I ought, and I think he is. You don't know how money gathers with a successful pedlar, who is up to his business. I am inclined to think that the *Cannie Soogah* is the only man who can throw any light on the history of Buck English."

"Who the devil *is* that impudent scoundrel, father? for it appears that, as regards his birth, family, and origin, nobody knows anything certain about him."

"And that is just the position in which I stand," replied his father. "It is a subject on which he himself gives no satisfaction to any one. When asked about it, he laughs in your face, and replies that he doesn't exactly know, but is of the opinion that he is the son of his father—whoever that was; but *that*, he says, he is not wise enough to know either, and then, after another laugh at you, he leaves you."

"How does he live?" asked John, "for he has no visible means of support—he neither works nor is engaged in any profession, and yet he dresses well."

"*Well!* John," exclaimed Julia.

"Perhaps I ought not to say—*well*, Julia; but at all events, he is very fond of being considered a buck, and he certainly dresses up to *that* character."

"He admits that he was eight years in England," said his father; "although, for my part, it's just as likely that he spent seven years of that time in Botany Bay; if not, I should have no objection that something should occur to make him spend the remainder of his life there."

"Why should you wish the man so ill, papa?" asked Mary.

"Why, Mary—faith for a very good reason, my dear child; because I don't wish to see your sister annoyed and persecuted by the scoundrel. The fellow is so impudent that he will take no rebuff."

"By the way, father, where does M'Carthy stop, now that he is in the country?" asked Alick, with some hesitation, and a brow a little heightened in color.

"For the present," replied the other, "he stops with our friend, O'Driscol, the new magistrate. Faith, it's a shove-up for O'Driscol to get on the Bench. Halloo! there's M'Carthy's knock—I'm sure I know it."

The proctor was right; but notwithstanding his quickness and sagacity, there was another individual in the room at that moment who recognized it sooner than he did.

Julia arose, and withdrew under some pretence which we cannot now remember, but really because she felt that had she remained until M'Carthy's entrance, her blushes would have betrayed her.

"M'Carthy is a very handsome young fellow," observed John—"would he think of entering any pretensions to Katherine O'Driscol?"

"What d——d stuff you often talk, John—begging your pardon," replied his brother; "he has hard reading, and his profession to think of—both of which he will find enough for him, setting Katherine O'Driscol and love out of the question."

"Very good, Alick," said John. "Ha! ha! ha! I thought I would touch you there. The bait took, my boy; jealousy, jealousy, father."

Alick, on finding that he was detected, forced himself into a confused laugh, and, in the meantime, M'Carthy entered.

Nothing could surpass the cordiality of his reception. A holiday spirit was obvious among the family—at least among all who were then visible. Secretly, however, did his eye glance about in search of one, on whose reception of him more depended than a thousand welcomes from all the rest. In about twenty minutes Julia made her appearance, but to any person in the secret, it was obvious that she was combating with much inward, if not with some appearance of external confusion and restraint. After the first greetings were over, however, she gradually recovered her self-possession, and was able to join in the conversation without embarrassment or difficulty.

CHAPTER III.

Mountain Legislation, and its Executive of Blood.

After dinner that day, and while the gentlemen were yet at table, Mary and Julia, who, as we have said, had relieved their

mother of those benevolent attentions which she had been in the habit of paying to the neighboring sick and poor, proceeded on their way to the cottage of a destitute woman in the next village, who was then lying in what was considered to be a hopeless state. The proctor himself, while he exacted with a heartless and rapacious hand the last penny due to him, was yet too good a tactician to discountenance these spontaneous effusions of benevolence on the part of his wife and daughters. With a good deal of ostentation, and that peculiar swagger for which many shrewd and hard-hearted men of the world are remarkable, he actually got the medicine himself for the helpless invalid in question, not forgetting at the same time to make the bystanders in the apothecary's shop acquainted with the extent of his own private charity and that of his family besides. The girls had proceeded a part of the way on their charitable errand, when it occurred to them that the medicine, which their father had procured on the proceding day, had been forgotten, and as the sick woman was to commence taking it at a certain hour that evening, it was necessary that either one or both should return for it.

"You needn't come back, Julia," said Mary, "I will myself run home and fetch it;" and accordingly her sister went back at a quick step towards her father's house. The spot where Julia stood to await the return of her sister was within a few yards of a large white-thorn double ditch, on each side of which grew a close hedge of thorns, that could easily afford room for two or three men to walk abreast between them. Here she had not remained more than a minute or two, when, issuing from the cover of the thorns, and approaching her with something of a stage strut, our friend, Buck English, made his appearance.

"Miss Joolia," he ecxlaimed, with what was intended for a polite bow, "I hope you will pardon me for this third liberty I teek in offering to spake to you. I see," he proceeded, observing her rising indignation, "that you are not inclined to hear me, but I kim here to give you a bit of advice as a friend—listen to my proposals, if you're wise—and don't make me the enemy of yourself or your family, for so sure as you reject me, so certainly will you bring ruin upon both yourself and them. I say this as a friend, and merk me, the day may come when you will oll remember my words too late."

There was a vehemence in his language, which could admit of no mistake as to the fixed determination of his purpose; his lips were compressed, his eyebrows severely knit, and his unfeeling hyena eye scintillated with a fire that proceeded as much from an inclination to revenge as affection. Julia Purcel, however, though a women, possessed no whit of her sex's cowardice; on the contrary, her bosom heaved with indignant scorn, and her eye gave him back glance for glance, in a spirit that disdained to quail before his violence.

"Do you dare to threaten me or my family, sir?" she replied; "I think you should know us better than to imagine that the threats of a ruffian, for such I now perceive you to be, could for a moment intimidate either them or me. Begone, sir, I despise and detest you—until this moment, I looked upon and treated you as a fool, but I now find you are a villain—begone, I say; I scorn and defy you."

"You defy me, do you?"

"Yes, I have said it, I defy you."

"Well, then, so be it," he replied, "you must take the consequences, that's all, and let your favorite, M'Carthy, look to himself too."

Having uttered these significant words, he re-entered the double ditch, along which a common pathway went, and in a minute or two was out of sight.

Mary, on her return, at once perceived, by the flushed cheek and kindled eye of her sister, that something had discomposed her.

"Why, goodness me, dear Julia, you look disturbed or frightened; what is the matter?"

"Disturbed I am," she replied, "but not at all frightened. This worthy lover of mine, whom nothing can abash, has honored me with another interview."

"Is it after the scene between him and my brother to-day?"

"Certainly," she replied, with a smile, for she now began once more to look upon the matter in a ludicrous point of view, "and has threatened not only myself, but the whole family with destruction, unless I favor his addresses—ha! ha! ha! He has one good quality in a lover, at all events—perseverance."

"Say rather effrontery and impudence," replied Mary.

"Yes, I admit that," said her sister; "but at any rate, they very often go together, I believe."

She then related the dialogue that took place, at which her sister, who was equally remarkable for courage, only laughed.

"The fellow after all is only a fool," she observed. "If he were anything else, or if he had any serious intention of carrying such threats into effect, he most assuredly would not give expression to them, or put you on

your guard against them. No, he is only a fool and not worth thinking about: let him go."

They then proceeded to the cabin of poor Widow Cleary, to whom they administered the medicine with their own hands, and to whose children they brought their mother's orders to attend the house, that they might be relieved with that comfortable food which their destitute circumstances so much required.

On their return home, the relation of the incident which we have just narrated very much amused the family, with the exception of M'Carthy, who expressed himself not quite at ease after having heard English's threats.

"There is an extraordinary mystery about that man," he observed; "no one knows or can tell who he is; you can call him a fool, too, but take my word that there never hung mystery about a fool yet; I fear he will be found to be something much worse than a fool."

"Nonsense," replied the proctor. "The fellow is only ridiculous and contemptible; he and his clipped English are not worth thinking of—let him go to the deuce."

M'Carthy still shook his head, as if of opinion that they underrated the Buck's power of injuring them, but the truth was that neither Purcel nor his sons were at all capable of apprehending either fear or danger; they, therefore, very naturally looked upon the denunciations of English with a recklessness that was little less than foolhardy.

During the last few years they had been accustomed to receive threats and written notices of vengeance, which had all ended in nothing, and, in consequence of this impunity, they had become so completely inured to them as to treat them only with laughter and scorn.

It has been already intimated to the reader that M'Carthy was residing, during a short visit to the country, at the house of O'Driscol, the newly-made magistrate. It was pretty late that evening when he took leave of the Purcels, but as the distance was not far he felt no anxiety at all upon the subject of his journey. The night, however, was so pitchy dark, that even although well acquainted as he was with the road, he found some difficulty in avoiding the drains and ditches that enclosed it. At length he had arrived within a couple of hundred yards of O'Driscol's house, when as he was proceeding along suddenly found himself come unexpectedly against some individual, who was coming from an opposite direction.

"Hillo! who is here?" said the voice, in a kind of whisper.

"A friend," replied M'Carthy; "who are you?"

"What's your name?" inquired the strange voice, "and be quick."

"My name is M'Carthy," replied our friend; "why do you ask?"

"Come this way," said the stranger; "you are Francis M'Carthy, I think?"

"Yes, that is my name—what is yours?"

"That doesn't matther," replied the voice, "stand aside here, and be quiet as you value your life."

M'Carthy thought at the moment that he heard the noise of many feet, as it were in the distance.

"You will not be safe," said the voice, "if you refuse to take my advice;" and as he spoke he partly forced M'Carthy over to the side of the road where they both stood invisible from the darkness of the night, as well as from the shelter of a large whitethorn branch, which would, even in daylight, almost have concealed them from view. In a few minutes, a large body of people passed them with that tread which always characterizes the motions of undisciplined men. There was scarcely a word among them, but M'Carthy felt that, knowing them as he did to be peasants, there was something dreadful in the silence which they maintained so strictly. He could not avoid associating their movements and designs with some act of violence and bloodshed, that was about to add horror to the impenetrable gloom of night, whose darkness, perhaps, they were about to light up with the roof-tree of some unsuspecting household, ignorant of the fiery fate that was then so near them.

Several hundreds must have passed, and when the last sounds of their tread had died away, M'Carthy and his companion left their hiding-place, when the latter addressed him as follows:—

"Now, Mr. M'Carthy, I wish you to understand that you are wid a friend—mark my words—avoid the man they call Buck English, for of all men livin' he hates you the most; and listen, whenever you come to this country don't stop in procthor Purcel's, otherwise you may draw down ruin and destruction upon him and his; and, if I'm not mistaken, you're the last man livin' who would wish to do that."

"By the way," asked M'Carthy, "who *is* Buck English?"

"I don't know," replied the stranger, "nor do I know any one that does."

"And may I not ask who you are yourself?"

"No—for I've good raisons for not telling you. Good-night, and mark my words—avoid that man, for I know he would give a good

deal to sit over your coffin—and you in it."

We shall now allow M'Carthy to proceed to his friend's house, which he reached without any further adventure, and ask the reader to accompany the stranger, who in a few minutes overtook the body we have described, to which he belonged. They proceeded in the same way, still maintaining a silence that was fearful and ominous, for about a mile and a half. Whilst proceeding, they met several persons on the road, every one of whom they stopped and interrogated as to his name and residence, after which they allowed them to pass on.

"Why do they stop and examine the people they meet?" whispered one of them —a young lad about nineteen—to him who had just warned M'Carthy.

"Why," said the other, "is it possible you don't know that? It's aisy seen you're but young in the business yet."

"This is my first night to be out," replied the youth.

"Well, then," rejoined our friend, "it's in the expectation of meetin' an enemy, especially some one that's *marked*."

"An' what would they do if they did?"

"Do?" said the other; "*do for him!* If they met sich a one, they'd take care his supper wouldn't cost him much."

"Blood alive!" exclaimed the young fellow, "I'm afeard this is a bad business."

"Faith, an' if it is, it's only beginnin'," said the other, "but whether good or bad the counthry requires it, an' the Millstone must be got rid of."

"What's the Millstone?"

"The Protestant church. The man that won't join us to put it down, must be looked upon and treated as an enemy to his country —that is, if he is a Catholic."

"I have no objection to that," replied the youth, "but I don't like to see lives taken or blood shed; murdher's awful."

"You must set it down, then," replied the other, "that both will happen, ay, an' that you must yourself shed blood and take life when it come your turn. Howanever, that will soon come aisy to you; a little practice, and two or three opportunities of seeing the thing done, an' you'll begin to take delight in it."

"And do *you* now?" asked the unsophisticated boy, with a quivering of the voice which proceeded from a shudder.

"Why, no," replied the other, still in a whisper, for in this tone the dialogue was necessarily continued; "not yet, at any rate; but if it came my turn to take a life I should either do it, or lose my own some fine night."

"Upon my conscience," whispered the lad, "I can't help thinkin' that it's a bad business, and won't end well."

"Ay, but the general opinion is, that if we get the Millstone from about our necks, a few lives taken on their side, and a few boys hanged on ours, won't make much difference one way or other, and then everything *will* end well. That's the way of it."

This muffled dialogue, if we may use the expression, was now interrupted by a change in their route. At a Rath, which here capped an eminence of the road, a narrow bridle-way diverged to the right, and after a gradual ascent for about a mile and a half, was lost upon a rough upland, that might be almost termed a moor. Here they halted for a few minutes, in deliberation as to whether they should then proceed across the moor, or wait until the moon should rise and enable them to see their way.

It was shortly resolved upon to advance, in order that they might lose as little time as possible, in consequence of having, as it appeared, two or three little affairs to execute in the course of the night. They immediately struck across the rough ground which lay before them, and as they did so, the conversation began to be indulged in more freely, in consequence of their remoteness from any human dwelling or the chances of being overheard. The whole body now fell into groups, each headed by a certain individual who acted as leader, but so varied were the topics of discourse, some using Irish, others the English language, that it was rather difficult to catch the general purport of what they said.

At length when a distance of about two miles had been traversed, they came out upon one of those small green campaigns, or sloping meadows, that are occasionally to be found embosomed in the mountains, and upon which the eye rests with an agreeable sense of relief, on turning to them from the dark and monotonous hue of the gloomy wastes around them.

They had not been many minutes here when the moon rose, and after a little time her light would have enabled a casual or accidental spectator to witness a fearful and startling scene. About six hundred men were there assembled; every man having his face blackened, and all with shirts over their outward and usual garments. As soon as the moon, after having gained a greater elevation in the sky, began to diffuse a clearer lustre on the earth, we may justly say that it would be difficult to witness so strange and appalling a spectacle. The white appearance of their persons, caused by the shirts which they wore in the manner we have stated, for this peculiar occasion, when contrasted with

their blackened visages, gave them more the character of demons than of men, with whom indeed their strange costume and disfigured faces seemed to imitate the possession of very little in common, with the exception of shape alone. The light was not sufficiently strong to give them distinctness, and as a natural consequence, there was upon them a dim gleamy look—a spectral character that was frightful, and filled the mind with an impression that the meeting must have been one of supernatural beings, if not an assemblage of actual devils, in visible shape, coming to perpetrate on earth some deed of darkness and of horror.

Among the whole six hundred there might have been about one hundred muskets. Pistols, blunderbusses, and other arms there were in considerable numbers, but these were not available for a portion, at least, of the purposes which had brought them together.

After some preliminary preparation a light was struck, a candle lit, around which a certain number stood, so as to expose it to as little chance of observation as possible. A man then above the middle size, compact and big-boned, took the candle in one hand, and brought it towards a long roll which he held in the other. He wore a white hat with a low crown, had large black whiskers which came to his chin, and ran besides round his neck underneath. The appearance of this man, and of those who surrounded the dim light which he held was, when taking their black unnatural faces into consideration, certainly calculated to excite no other sensations than those of terror mingled with disgust.

"Now," said he, in a strong rich brogue, "let every man fall into rank according as his name is called out; and along with his name he must also repate his number whatever it may be, up until we come to a hundred, for I believe we have no more muskets. Where is Sargin Lynch?"

"Here I am," replied that individual, who enjoyed a sergeant's pension, having fought through the peninsular campaign.

"Take the lists then and proceed," said the leader; "we have little time to lose."

Lynch then called over a list until he had reached a hundred; every man, as he answered to his name, also repeated his number; as for instance,

"Tom Halloran."

"Here—one!"

"Peter Rafferty!"

"Here—two!" and so on, until the requisite number was completed, and every man as he responded fell also into rank.

Having thus got them into line, he gave them a rather hasty drill; and this being over, hundred after hundred went through the same process of roll-call and manœuvre, until the task of the night was completed, so far, at least, as that particular duty was concerned. Other duties, however, in more complete keeping with their wild and demon-like appearance, were still to be performed. Short rolls were called, by which selections for the assemblage of such as had been previously marked down for the robbery of arms, were made with considerable promptitude. And, indeed, most of those to whom such outrageous and criminal attacks were assigned, seemed to feel flattered by being appointed to the performance of them.

At length, when these matters were arranged, and completed, the whole body was ordered to fall into rank, and the large man, who acted as leader, walked for a time up and down in front of them, after which, as nearly opposite their centre as possible, he deliberately knelt down, and held his two open palms across each other for some seconds, or perhaps for half a minute.

A low fearful murmur, which no language could describe, and no imagination conceive without having heard it, ran along the whole line. Whether it proceeded from compassion or exultation, or a blending of both mingled with horror and aversion, or a diabolical satisfaction, it is difficult or rather absolutely impossible to say. The probability is, however, that it was made up of all these feelings, and that it was their unnatural union, expressed under such wild and peculiar circumstances, that gave it the impressive and dreadful effect we have described.

"What does he mane?" said some of the youthful and inexperienced portion of them, in the accustomed whisper.

"There's a death to take place to-night," replied an older member; "there's either a man or family *doomed*, God knows which!"

He then arose, and going along the front rank, selected by name twenty-four individuals, who were made to stand in order; to one of these he whispered the name and residence of the victim; this one immediately whispered the secret to the person next him, who communicated it in his turn, and thus it went round until the last had received it. This being accomplished, he stood apart from the appointed murderers, and made them all, one after another, whisper to him the name and residence as before.

"Now," said the leader, "it's my duty to tell you that there's a man to *be done for* to-night; and you must all know his crime. He was warned by us no less than four times not to pay tithe, and not only that, but he refused to be sworn out to do so, and wounded one of the boys that wor sent by

me one night to swear him. He has set us at defiance by publicly payin' his tithes to a man that we'll take care of some o' these nights. He's now doomed, an' was tried on the last night of our meetin'. *This night he dies.* Them that has his life in their hands knows who he is an' where they'll find him. Once and for all then this night he dies. Now, boys, such of you as have nothing to do go home, and such of you as have your work before you do it like men, and don't draw down destruction on yourselves by neglectin' it. You know your fate if you flinch. —I have done."

Those who were not on duty, to use a military phrase, returned across the moors by the way they came, and consequently reached the bridle road we have spoken of, together. Such, however, as were set apart for the outrages and crimes of the night, remained behind, in order that the peculiar destination of their atrocities might be known only to the individuals who were appointed to perpetrate them.

On their return, our unknown friend, who had rendered such an essential service to M'Carthy, thus addressed his companion—that is to say, the man who happened to be next him,—

"Well, neighbor, what do you think of this night's work?"

"Why, that everything's right, of coorse," replied the other; "any man that strives to keep the Millstone about our necks desarves his fate; at the same time," he added, dropping his voice still lower, "I'd as soon not be the man *to do the deed*, neighbor."

"Well, I can't say," returned our friend, "but I'm a trifle of your way of thinkin'."

"There's one thing troubles me," added his companion, an' it's this—there was a young lad wid us to-night from my neighborhood, he was near the last of us as we went along the road on our way to the mountains; I seen him whisperin' to some one a good deal as we came out—now, I know there's not on airth a kinder-hearted or 'more affectionate boy than he is; he hasn't a heart to hurt a fly, and is loved and respected by every one in the neighborhood. Very well —God of glory! isn't it too bad, that this fine, handsome, lovin', and affectionate boy, the only child of his father and mother,—*fareer gair**—my friend, whoever you are, isn't it too bad, that that boy, innocent and harmless as a child, will go home to his lovin' parents a murdherer this night?"

"What makes you say so?" asked our unknown friend.

"Why," replied the man, "he stood beside me in the ranks, and has been sent to murdher the man that was doomed."

To this our friend judiciously avoided making any reply, the fact being that several individuals in high trust among these Whiteboys were occasionally employed to sound suspected persons, in order to test their sincerity. For about half a minute he spoke not; but at length he said, with something like sternness—

"There's no use in sich talk as this, my friend; every man that joins us must make up his mind to do his duty to God and his country."

"It's a quare way of sarvin' God to commit midnight murdher on his creatures," responded the man with energy.

"I don't know who you are," replied our friend, "but if you take my advice, you'll not hould such conversation wid every man you spake to in this body. Wid me you're safe, but at the same time, I say, don't draw suspicion on yourself, and it'll be betther for you."

"Who is this man?" asked the other, who appeared to have been borne away a good deal by his feelings, "that commands us?"

"Don't you know Captain Midnight?" replied the other, somewhat evasively.

"Why, of coorse I know the man by that name; but, at the same time, I know nothin' else about him."

"Did you never hear?" asked his companion.

"Why, to tell you the truth," said the other, "I heerd it said that he's the *Cannie Soogah*, or the Jolly Pedlar that goes about the country."

"Well," said the other, lowering his voice a good deal in reply, "if I could trust you, I'd tell you what I think."

"I'll give you my name, then," replied the other, "if you doubt me;" he accordingly whispered it to him, and the conversation proceeded.

"I know your family well," returned our friend; "but, as I said before, be more on your guard, unless you know well the man you spake to. As for myself, I sometimes think it *is* the *Cannie Soogah* and sometimes that it is *not*. Others say it's Buck English; but the Buck, for raisons that some people suspect, could never be got to join us. He wishes us well, he says, but won't do anything till there comes an open 'ruction, and then he'll join us, but not before. It's hard to say, at any rate, who commands us when we meet this way."

"Why so?"

"Why the dickens need you ax? Sure it's not the same man two nights runnin'."

"But I have been only three or four times

* Bitter misfortune.

out yet," replied his companion; "and, sure enough, you're very right—they hadn't the same man twiste."

They had now reached the road under the Fort or Rath we have alluded to, and as there was no further necessity for any combined motion among them, and as every man now was anxious to reach home as soon as possible, their numbers diminished rapidly, until they ultimately dispersed themselves in all directions throughout the country.

CHAPTER IV.

Mirth and Murder—A Tithe-Proctor's Office.

The next morning, when our proctor and his family assembled at breakfast, their usual buoyancy of spirits was considerably checked by a report which had already spread over a great portion of the country, that a very industrious and honest farmer, who lived within about four miles of them, had been murdered in his own house the night before, by a party of fellows disguised with blackened faces, and who wore shirts over their clothes. The barbarous and brutal deed, in consequence of the amiable and excellent character of the man—who had been also remarkable for resolution and courage—had already excited an extraordinary commotion throughout the country.

"Boys," said Purcel, "I have been in C——m this morning, and, I'm sorry to say, there's bad news abroad."

"How is that, sir?" asked Alick,—"no violence, I hope; although I wouldn't feel surprised if there were; the country is getting into a bad state: I think myself the people are mad, absolutely mad."

"You both knew Matthew Murray," he proceeded, "that lived down at Rathkeerin?"

"Certainly, father," said John; "what about him?—no harm, I hope?"

"He was murdered in his own house last night," replied his father; "but it's some consolation that one of the murdering villains is in custody."

"That is bad business, certainly," replied John; "in fact, it's dreadful."

"It *is* dreadful," said the father; "but the truth is, we must have the country, at least this part of it, proclaimed, and martial law established;—damn the murdering scoundrels, nothing else is fit for them. We must carry arms, boys, in future; and by h—n, the first man I see looking at me suspiciously, especially from behind a hedge, I'll shoot him. As a tithe-proctor I could do so without much risk."

"Not, father," said Alick, "until he should first offer, or make an attempt at violence."

"I would not, in the present state of the country, wait for it," replied the determined and now indignant proctor; "if I saw him watch me with arms in his hands, or any dangerous weapon about his person, by h—n I'd put a bullet through him, with no more remorse than I would through a dog—and, if the animal were a good one, I think he would be the greater public loss of the two."

Just at this moment, the females of the family, who had been giving breakfast to a number of poor destitute creatures, made their appearance.

"Where have you all been?" asked Mrs. Purcel, addressing her husband and sons; "here have we been waiting breakfast for you during the last half-hour, and finding you were none of you within, we went and gave these poor creatures without something to eat."

"Ay," responded the angry proctor, "and it's not unlikely that the son, or husband, or brother of some of them may take a slap at me or at one of our sons, from behind a hedge, before these long nights pass off. D—n me, but it's throwing pearls before swine, to show them either kindness or charity."

"Something has angered you, papa," said Mary; "I hope you have heard nothing unpleasant; I am not very timid, but when a whole country is in such a state of disturbance, one may entertain a reasonable apprehension, certainly."

"Why, I *am* angry, Mary," replied her father; "there's as decent and quiet, but, at the same time, as spirited a man as there ever was in the barony, murdered this morning—Mat Murray of Rathkeerin; however, as I said, it's a great consolation that one of the murderers is in custody."

"And who is the wretch, papa?" asked Julia.

"One that nobody ever could have suspected for such an act," replied Purcel—"a son of one of our own tenants—honest Michael Devlin's son—James."

"Utterly impossible, father," exclaimed Julia, "there must be a mistake; that quiet and dutiful boy—their only son—never could have been concerned in the crime of murder."

"Well, perhaps not, Judy; but, you silly girl, you talk as if you were in love with him. Why, child, there is such a system abroad now that a man can scarcely trust his own brother—no, nor does a father know, when he sits down to his breakfast in the morning with his own son, whether, as Scripture says,

he is not dipping his hand in the dish with a murderer."

"Mat," said his wife, "you ought not to be out late at night, nor the boys either. You know there is a strong feeling against you; and indeed I think you ought not, any of you, ever to go out without arms about you—at all events, until the country gets quiet."

"So I was just saying, Nancy," replied her husband;—"hallo! who's this coming up to the hall-door?—begad, our old pleasant friend, the *Cannie Soogah*., Upon my troth, I'm glad to see him. Hallo! *Cannie!—Cannie Soogah*, my hearty—Jolly Pedlar, I say—this way! How are you, man?—have you breakfasted? Of course not. Well, go to the kitchen—and, if you don't show good eating, it won't be for want of materials."

"God save you, Misther Purcel," replied the pedlar, in a rich, round brogue; "God save you, young gintlemen. Oh, thin, Misther Purcel, by my sowl it's your four quarthers that has a right to be proud of your family! And the ladies—not forgettin' the misthress herself—devil the likes of the same two young ladies I see on my whole bait, an' that's the country at large, barrin' the barony of Bedhehusth, where these cruel murdhers is committed; an' devil a foot I'll ever set into it till it's changed for the betther."

"Well, be off," said the proctor, "to the kitchen; get your breakfast first, and then we'll chat to you."

"I will; but oh, Misther Purcel darlin', did you hear what happened last night?"

"Is it Murray's business?"

"What do you call Murray's business, Misther Purcel? 'Tis Murray's murdher, you mane?"

"Certainly, I have heard it all this morning in C——m."

The pedlar only shook his head, looked upwards, and raising his two hands so as to express amazement, exclaimed—"Well, well, what is the world goin' to! troth, I'll not ate half my breakwist in regard of it!" So saying he slung his huge pack upon his shoulder as if it had been a mere bag of feathers, and took his way round to the kitchen as he had been desired.

The *Cannie Soogah*, for so the people universally termed him, was in person and figure a fine burly specimen of manhood. His hair was black, as were a pair of large whiskers, that covered the greater portion of his face, and nearly met at his chin. His arms and limbs were powerfully made, and what is not always the case in muscular men, they betokened great activity as well as unusual strength. Nobody, for instance, would look without astonishment at the ease with which he swung a pack, that was weighty enough to load an ass, over his shoulder, or the lightness and agility with which he trotted on under it from morning till night, and this during the very severest heat of summer.

M'Carthy, on reaching O'Driscol's the night before, had come to the conclusion of not making any allusion whatsoever to the incident which had just occurred to him. O'Driscol, who was only a newly-fledged magistrate, would, he knew, have made it the ground-work of a fresh communication to government, or to his friend the Castle, as he called it, especially as he had many other circumstances of less importance since his elevation to the magistracy. One indeed would imagine that the peace and welfare of that portion of the country had been altogether left to his sole and individual management, and that nothing at all of any consequence could get on properly in it without his co-operation or interference in some way. For this reason, as well as for others, M'Carthy prudently hesitated either to arouse his loyalty or disturb the tranquility of his family, and after joining him in a tumbler of punch, or what O'Driscol termed his night-cap, he retired to bed, where, however, he could not for a considerable time prevent himself from ruminating, with a good deal of seriousness, upon the extraordinary interview he had had with the friendly stranger.

After breakfast the next morning he resolved, however, to communicate to his friends, the Purcels, who were at all events no alarmists, and would not be apt to make him, whether he would or not, the instrument of a selfish communication with the government, a kind of honor for which the quiet and unassuming student had no relish whatsoever. He sauntered towards the proctor's, at whose house he arrived a few minutes before the return from the kitchen of our friend the *Cannie Soogah*, who had been treated there with an excellent and abundant breakfast, to which, in spite of the murder of Murray, he did ample justice.

"Now, Mr. Purcel," he exclaimed, tossing down his pack as if it had been a schoolboy's satchel, "by the lomenty-tarry you have made a new man of me! Whoo!" he proceeded, cutting a caper more than a yard high, "show me the man now, that would dar to say bow to your—beg pardon, ladies, I must be jinteel for your sakes—that would dar, I say, to look crucked at you or one a' your family, and maybe the Cannie Soogah wouldn't rise the lap of his liver. Come, young ladies, shall I make my display? I know you'll buy lot o' things and plenty besides; I can praise my goods, thank God, for you see, Miss Mary, when the world

comes to an end it'll be found that the man who couldn't say three words for himself, and one for his friend, must be sent down stairs to keep the fire in. Miss Julia, I have a shawl here that 'ud make you look worse than you do."

"Worse, Cannie!" replied Julia, "do you call that a recommendation?"

"Certainly, Miss Julia, you look so well that nothing on airth could make you look betther, and by way of variety, I've gone to the Well o' the world's end to get something to make you look worse. God knows whether I've succeeded or not, but at all events, we'll thry."

So saying, he produced a very handsome shawl, together with a rather large assortment of jewelry and other matters connected with the female toilet, of considerable taste and expense.

"Here," he added, "are some cotton and silk stockins'—but upon my profits, it's not to every foot an' leg I'd produce them. I'm a great coortier, ladies, you must know, and am in love wid every purty girl I meet—but sure that's only natural; however, as I was sayin', it's not to a clype or a pair of smoothin' irons I'll produce such stockins' as these! No, no, but a purty foot an' leg is always sure to get the worth o' their money from the Cannie Soogah!"

"Well done, Cannie!" said the proctor, "dix me, but you're a pleasant fellow—come girls, you must buy something—handsel him. You got no handsel to-day, Cannie?" he added, winking at the pedlar to say no.

"Barrin' the first foundation in the kitchen within," he replied; "for you must know that's what I call my breakfast, handsel of any kind didn't cross my palm this day."

"In that case, the girls must certainly buy something," added Purcel.

"But we've no money, papa."

"But," replied the pedlar, "you have what's betther—good credit with the Cannie Soogah—och, upon my profits I'd rather have one sweet coaxin' smile from that purty little mouth of yours, Miss Julia, than money in hand any day! Ah! Misther Purcel, darlin', isn't it a poor thing *not* to have an estate of ten thousand a year?" and here he looked wistfully at the smiling Julia, and shrugged his shoulders like a man who knew he was never likely to gain his wishes.

"I would buy something," said Mary, "but, like Julia, I am penniless."

"Never say so, Miss Mary, to me; only name what you'd like—lave the price to my honesty, and the payment to my patience, and upon my profits you won't complain, I'll go bail."

"Yes," observed Julia, "or what if papa would treat us to something? Come, papa, for the sake of old times; let us see whether you have forgotten any of your former craft."

"Good, Judy! ha! ha! ha!—well done! but Cannie, have you nothing for the gentlemen?"

Now, we must pause for a little to state, that the moment M'Carthy, who was now present, heard the jolly pedlar's voice, he started, and felt considerably surprised. The tones of it were neither familiar to him nor yet were they strange. That he had heard them somewhere, and on some occasion, he could almost have sworn. Occasionally a turn of the man's voice would strike him as not being new to him, but again, for the next minute or two, it was such as he could not remember to have ever heard. This we say by way of parenthesis.

"For the gentlemen! Lord help you, Mr. Purcel, I never think of them when the ladies is before me—who would! However, I'm well prepared even for them. Here is a case o' razors that 'ud cut half an inch before the edge; now, if you find me another pair that'll do the *seem*—hem! the *same*—I'll buy the Bank of Ireland and give it to you for a new-year's-gift."

"Don't you know this gentleman?" asked the proctor, pointing to M'Carthy.

"Let me see," said he—"well now—eh, no—I think not, he is neither so well made, nor by any manes so well lookin' as the other;" and the pedlar, as he spoke, fixed his eyes, but without seeming to gaze, upon Julia, who, on hearing a comparision evidently so disadvantageous to M'Carthy, blushed deeply, and passed to another part of the room, in order to conceal what she felt must have been visible, and might have excited observation.

"No," proceeded the pedlar; "I thought at first he was one of the left-legged M'Squiggins's, as they call them, from Fumblestown—but he is not, I know, for the raisons I said. They're a very good plain family, the M'Squiggins's, only that nobody's likely to fall in love wid them—upon my profits, I'm half inclined to think he's one of them still—eh, let me see again—would you turn round a little, if you plaise, sir, till I thry if the cast's in your eye. Upon my faith, there it is sure enough! How are you, Misther M'Squiggins? I'm happy to see you well, sir. How is your sisther, Miss Pugshey, an' all the family, sir?—all well, I hope, sir?"

"All well," replied M'Carthy, laughing as loud as any of the rest, every one of whom

was actually in convulsions—for they knew, with the exception of Julia, who was deceived at first by the pedlar's apparent gravity, that he was only bantering her lover.

The proctor, who, although a man that loved money as his God—with his whole heart, soul, and strength—was yet exceedingly anxious to stand well with the world, and on this account never suffered a mere trifle to stand between him and the means of acquiring a good name, and having himself been considered a man of even of a benevolent spirit. He consequently made some purchases from the pedlar, with whom he held a very amusing and comic discussion, as touching the prices of many articles in that worthy's pack. Nay, he went so far as to give them a good-humored exhibition of the secrets and peculiarities known only to the initiated, and bought some amall matters in the slang terms with which none but the trade are acquainted.

"Come, boys," said he, "I have set you a good example; won't you buy something from the jolly pedlar?"

John and Alick bought some trifling things, and M'Carthy purchased a pair of bracelets for the girls, which closed the sales for that morning.

"Well, now," said the pedlar, whilst folding up again the goods which he had displayed for sale, "upon my profits, Misther Purcel, it's a perfect delight to me to call here, an' that whether I dale or not—although I,m sure to do so always when I come. Well, you have all dealt wid me now for payment, and here goes to give you something for nothing—an, in truth, it's a commodity that, although always chape, is seldom taken. 'Tis called good advice. The ladies—God bless them, don't stand in need of it, for sure the darlins' never did anything from Eve downwards, that 'ud require it. Here it is then, Misther Purcel, let you and your sons do what the ould song says—'be good boys and *take care of yourselves. Thighin thu?** An' this gintleman, if I knew his name, maybe I'd say something to him too."

"This is Mr. M'Carthy, Cannie."

"Ay, M'Carthy—troth 'tis a good ould name. Well, Mr. M'Carthy, all I have to say to you is, that *if you happen to meet a man that gives you good advice*, TAKE IT. An' now God be wid you all, an' spare you to one another!"

So saying, he slung his huge pack over his shoulders almost without an effort, and commencing a merry old Irish song he proceeded lightly and cheerfully on his journey.

"Well, boys," said the proctor, "now that we've had a good hearty laugh with the Cannie Soogah, let us proceed to business. I see by your red coats and top-boots, that you're for the hounds to-day, but as I'm in a hurry, I wish before you go, that you'd see those sneaking devils that are hanging about the place. Hourigan is there again with fresh falsehoods—don't be misled by him—the ill-looking scoundrel is right well able to pay—and dix me if I'll spare him. Tell him he needn't expect any further forbearance—a rascal that's putting money in the saving's bank to be pleadin' poverty! It's too bad. But the truth is, boys, there's no one behind in their tithes now entitled to forbearance, and for the same reason they must pay or take the consequences; we'll see whether they or the law will prove the strongest, and that very soon. Good-bye, boys; good-bye, M'Carthy—and I say, Jack and Alick, be on your sharps and don't let them lads *do* you—d'ye mind now?—keen's the word."

He then got on his comfortable jaunting-car, and drove off to wait, according to appointment, upon the Rev. Jeremiah Turbot, D.D.

"Mogue Moylan," said John, "will you go out and tell them fellows that I and Alick will be in the office presently—and do you hear? tell them to look like men, and not so much like murderers that came to take our lives. Say we'll be in the office presently, and that we hope it's not excuses they're fetching us."

"I will, Misther John; but, troth, it's the worst word in their cheek they'd give me, if I deliver the last part of your message. 'Tis my head in my fist I'd get, maybe; however, Misther John, between you an' me, they're an ill-looking set, one an' all o' them, an' could pay their *tides*, every tail o' them, *if they wished.*"

"I know that very well," replied the young fellow, "but my father's not the man to be trifled with. We'll soon see whether they or the law's the strongest; that's all."

Moylan went over to where the defaulters were standing, and putting up his hand, he stroked down his cheek with great gravity.

"Are yez in a hurry, good people?" said he.

"Some of us is," replied a voice.

"Ay, all of us," replied others; "and we're here now for an hour and a half, and no sign of seein' us."

"Yez *are* in a hurry, then?"

"To be sure we are."

"Well, to them that's in a hurry I've a word to say."

"What is it, Mogue?"

"Why, it is this, *take your time*—ever an' always, when you happen to be in a hurry—take your time."

"Maybe, Mogue," they replied, "if you

*Do you understand.

were widout your breakfast, as we are, you wouldn't say so."

"Why, did'nt yez get your breakfasts yet?"

"Devil a morsel."

"Well, to them that didn't get their breakfasts I have another word to say."

"What is it, Mogue?"

"Why, have patience—ever and always when you're hungry, have patience, and you'll find it a great relief; it'll fill you and keep you in good condition—that I mayn't sin but it will! But, sure, I've got news for yez, boys," he added; "Masther John bid me tell you that, after about a month or so it'll be contrary to law to get hungry: there's an act o' parliament goin' to be made against it, you see; so that any villain disloyal enough to get hungry, if it's proved against him, will be liable to transportation. That I mayn't sin but it'll be a great comfort for the country—I mane, to have hunger made contrary to act o' parliament."

Mogue Moylan was, indeed, a fellow of a very original and peculiar character. Grave, sly, and hypocritical, yet apparently quiet and not susceptible of strong or vehement emotions, he was, nevertheless, more suggestive of evil designs and their fulfilment than any man, perhaps, in his position of life that ever existed. Though utterly without spirit, or the slightest conception of what personal courage meant, the reader not be surprised that he was also vindictive, and consequently treacherous and implacable. He could project crime and outrage with a felecity of diabolical invention that was almost incredible. He was, besides, close and cautious, unless when he thought that he could risk a falsehood with safety; and, in the opinion of some few who knew him, not merely dishonest, but an actual thief. His manner, too, was full of plausible assumption of great conscientiousness and simplicity. He seemed always calm and cool, was considered rather of a religious turn, and always expressed a strong horror against cursing or swearing in any shape. Indeed he had a pat anecdote, which he occasionally told, of a swoon or faint into which he usually fell, when a youth of about nineteen, in consequence of having been forced to take a book oath, for the first time, another act against which he entertained a peculiar antipathy. Now, all this was indeed very singular and peculiar; but he accounted for it by the scrupulous love of truth with which not only he himself, but his whole family, many of whom he said had given their lives for their country, were affected. The only foible that could be brought to the charge of honest Mogue, was a singular admiration for his own visage, which he never omitted to survey with remarkable complacency several times a day in a broken piece of looking-glass, which he kept for that especial purpose. This, and its not unnatural consequences, a belief that almost ever female who spoke to him with civility was smitten by his face and figure, constituted the only two weaknesses in a character otherwise so spotless and perfect as that of Mogue Moylan. Mogue was also a good deal subject to the influence of the pathetic, especially when he alluded to the misfortune, glory be to God, which had befallen the family, in the person of a long line of ancestors, and especially in that of his poor, simple father, whose word, as every one knew, was as good as his oath; and, indeed, very few doubted that remarkable fact, but who, notwithstanding had been transported during the space of seven years for suspicion of perjury; "for didn't the judge tell him, when he passed sentence upon him, that if he had been found guilty all out, or of anything beyant suspicion of it, he would be transported for life; 'an' instead of that,' said the judge, 'bekaise I persave,' says he, 'that you're an honest man, an' has been sworn against wrongfully in this business, and bekaise I see clearly that you love the truth, the sentence of the coort is,' says he, sheddin' tears, 'that you're to be transported only for seven years, an' you lave the coort an' the counthry,' says he, 'widout at stain upon your character—it's only the law that's against you—so, God be wid you,' the judge went on, wipin' his eyes, 'and grant you a safe and pleasant voyage acrass,' says he, an' he cried for some minutes like a child. That an' the unjust hangin' of my poor, simple ould grandfather for horse-stealin'—that is, for suspicion of horse-stealin'—is the only two misfortunes, thank God, that has been in our family of late days."

So much for the character of worthy Mogue, whom we must now permit to resume the delivery of his message.

The last words were uttered with so peculiar and significant a gravity, not without a good deal of dry sarcastic humor, that the men could not avoid laughing heartily.

"But," he proceeded, "I have better news still for yez. Sure Masther John desired me to let you all know that his father won't ax a penny o' tithe from one o' yez: all you have to do is to call at the office there in a few minutes, and you'll get aich o' you a receipt in full;* that is, if you don't keep civil tongues in your heads."

One of Mogue's qualities was the power of gravely narrating a fact with such peculiar

* By this he means a horse-whipping.

significance, that the very reverse of it was conveyed to the hearer; for the fellow was a perfect master of irony.

"Ah! well done Mogue; many a day o' reckoning *he* has had wid *us*, but maybe *our* day o' reckonin' wid *him* will come sooner than he expects, or wishes."

"Don't be thinkin' ill," said Mogue, "but keep yourselves always free from evil. What does Scripthur say? 'One good turn desarves another,' says Scripthur. Boys, always keep Scripthur before you, and you'll do right. 'One good turn deserves another,' says Scripthur, and you know yourselves, I hope, that many a good turn you received at his hands. That I may be happy, but it's good advice I'm givin' you!"

"Divil a betther, Mogue," replied Hourigan, with a significant scowl, and "it's we ourselves that'll be sure to take it some fine night."

"Night or day," replied Mogue, "it's always right to be doin' good, whether we sarve our country or religion. God prosper yez, at all events, and grant you success in your endeavors, an' that's the worst I wish you! There now, Masther John's in the office, ready an' willin' to give sich o' yez a resate in full as will—desarve it."

The situation in which the parties stood, during this dialogue, was at the rear of the premises into which the proctor's office opened, and where the country people were always desired to wait. They stood at the end of the stable, adjoining a wall almost eight feet high, on the other side of which was the pig-sty. Here, whilst the conversation just detailed went forward, stood a pretty, plump-looking, country-girl, one of the female servants of the proctor's establishment, named Letty Lenehan. She had come to feed the pigs, just in time to catch the greater portion of their conversation; and, as she possessed a tolerably clear insight into Mogue's character, she was by no means ignorant of certain illusions made in it, although she unquestionably did not comprehend its full drift. We have said that this girl understood his character very well, and scarcely any one had a better right or greater opportunities of doing so. Mogue, in fact, was in love with her, or at least, pretended to be so; but, whether he was or not, one thing we write as certain, that he most implicitly believed her to be so with himself. Letty was a well-tempered, faithful girl, honest and conscientious, but not without a considerable relish for humor, and with more than ordinary talents for carrying on either a practical joke or any other piece of harmless humbug, a faculty in which she was ably supported by a fellow-servant of a very different description from Mogue, named Jerry Joyce. Joyce, in fact, was not merely a strong contrast to Mogue, but his very reverse in almost every point of his character. He was open and artless in the opinion of many, almost to folly; but, under this apparent thoughtlessness, there existed a fund of good sense, excellent feeling, and quickness of penetration, for which the world gave him no credit, or at least but very little.

Jerry and Letty, therefore, between whom a real affection subsisted, were in the habit of amusing themselves, whenever they could do so without discovery, at Mogue's expense. Such, then, was the relative position of these parties at the present stage of our narrative.

When John Purcel was seen in the office, the tithe defaulters, for such they were, went to the outside of the window, where they all stood until it became the turn of each to go in. Although they went there to plead their inability to pay, yet, in fact, there were a great proportion of them who exhibited, neither by their manner nor appearance, any symptom whatever of poverty. On the countenances of most of them might be read, not only a stern, gloomy, and resolute expression, but one of dissatisfaction and bitter resentment. As they turned their eyes upon young Purcel, and looked around at the unequivocal marks of great wealth, if not luxury itself, that were conspicuous in every direction, there was a significance in the smiles and glances which passed between them, that gave very appropriate foretaste of the convulsions which ere long took place in the country. John Purcel himself had remarked these appearances on almost every recent occasion, and it was the striking, or rather startling, aspect of these men, that caused him to allude to it just before sending Moylan to them.

It is not our intention to detail, at full length, the angry altercations which took place between them, as each went in, from time to time, to apologize for not paying up his tithes. Every possible excuse was offered; but so well and thoroughly were Purcel and his sons acquainted with the circumstances, of, we may say, almost every family, not merely in the parish, but in the barony itself, that it proved a matter of the greatest difficulty to mislead or impose on any of them. Nay, so anxious did the shrewd tithe-proctor feel upon this subject, that he actually got himself proposed and elected a governor of the S[illegible] Bank, which had been for some t[illegible] established in C——m. By this [illegible]

was enabled to know that many of those who came to him with poverty on their lips, were actually lodging money in these economical institutions.

"Well, Carey," said he, to a comfortable-looking man that entered, "I hope you have no further apology to offer for your dishonesty?"

"Sorra thing, Mr. John, but that I'm not able to pay. I expect the landlord to come down upon me some o' these days—and what to do, or on what hand to turn, I'm sure I don't know on airth."

"You don't say so now, Carey?"

"Troth I do, Misther John; and I hope you'll spare me for a little—I mane till the hard times that's in it mends somehow."

"Well, Carey, all I can say is, that, if you don't know on what hand to turn, I can tell you."

"Thank you, Misther John; troth an' I do want to know that."

"Listen, then; before you come here to me with a barefaced and dishonest lie in your mouth, you ought to have gone to the C——m Savings' Bank, and drawn from the sum of two hundred and seventy-three pounds, which you have lying there, the slight sum of seven pounds twelve and ninepence which you owe us. Now, Carey, I tell you that you are nothing but an impudent, scheming, dishonest scoundrel; and I say, once for all, that we will see whether you, and every knavish rascal like you, or the law of the land, is the stronger. Mark me now, you impudent knave, we shall never ask you again. The next time you see us will be at the head of a body of police, or a party of the king's troops; for I swear that, as sure as the sun shines, so certainly will we take the tithe due out of your marrow, if we can get it nowhere else."

"Maybe, then," said Carey, "you will find that we'll laugh at the law, the polis, the king's troops, and Misther John Purcel into the bargain; and I now tell you to your teeth, that if one sixpence of tithe would save the sowls of every one belongin' to you, I won't pay it—so do your worst, and I defy you."

"Begone, you scoundrel. You are, I perceive, as rank a rebel as ever missed the rope; but you won't miss it. Go home now; for, as I said this moment, we will take the tithe out of your marrow, if you had thousands of your cut-throat and cowardly Whiteboys at your back. Don't think this villany will pass with us; we know how to handle you, and will too; begone, you dishonest ruffian, I have no more time to lose with you."

In this manner almost every interview terminated. Purcel was a warm and impetuous young fellow, who certainly detested everything in the shape of dishonesty or deceit; and here he had too many instances of both to be able to keep his temper, especially when he felt that he and his family were the sufferers. Other cases, however, were certainly very dissimilar to this; we allude especially to those of real distress, where the means of meeting the demand were not to be had. With such individuals the proctor's sons were disposed to be lenient, which is certainly more than could be said if he himself had to deal with them.

"Jemmy Mulligan," he said, to a poor-looking man, "go home to your family. We don't intend to take harsh measures with you, Jemmy; and you needn't come here again till we send for you."

"God bless you, sir; troth I don't know why the people say that you're all hard and unfeelin'—I can say for myself that I never found you so. Good morning, sir, and thank you, Misther John; and God forgive them that blackens you as they do!"

"Yes, Jemmy, I know they hate us, because we compel them to act honestly; but they will soon find that honesty, after all, is the cheapest course,—for we shall take d—d good care to make them pay through the nose for their knavery. We know they have a gang of firebrand agitators and hungry lawyers at their back; but we shall make them feel that the law is stronger than any treasonable combination that can be got up against it."

A third man came in. "Well, Tom, you're not coming to plead poverty, I hope?"

The man looked around him with peculiar intelligence. "Are we safe?" he asked; "and may I spake widout danger?"

"You may, Duggan."

"Well, then, I came to say that I'll call over to-morrow evenin' and pay it, but I daren't now."

"Why so, Tom?"

"Bekaise the most of us all have the tithe in our pockets, but as a proof that we did *not* pay it, we will, every man of us, be obliged to *show* it before we go home. I might pay it now, Mr. Purcel; but then, if I did, it's very likely I'd be a corpse before this day week. Sich is the state that things has come to; and how it'll end, God only knows. At any rate, I'll slip over afther dusk to-morrow evenin' and pay; but as you hope for mercy, and don't wish to see me taken from my wife and childre', don't breathe a syllable of it to man or mortual."

"I shall not, indeed, Tom," replied Purcel; "but I really did not think that matters were altogether so bad as you describe them. The

people are infatuated, and will only draw down the vengeance of the law upon their own heads. They will suffer, as they always do, by their own misconduct and madness."

Duggan had scarcely withdrawn, when our old friend, Darby Hourigan, thrust in his hateful and murderous-looking countenance.

"God save you, Misther John."

"God save you kindly, Misther Hourigan."

"Isn't it glorious weather for the saison, sir?"

"I have seen better and I have seen worse, Mr. Hourigan; but, Darby, passing the weather by, which neither you nor I can mend, allow me to say that I hope you are not coming here for the twentieth time to palm us off about the tithe."

"Troth, then, I am, Mr. John; I can't afford to pay *tide*—I'm a poor man, sir; and, as it happens that I never trouble the parson in religious matthers, I don't see what right the parson has to trouble me for my money."

"Ah! you have got the cant, I see. You have been tutored."

"I have got the truth, sir."

"Ay, but have you got the tithe, sir? for I do assure you, Mr. Hourigan, that it is not your logic, but your money I want."

"Begad, sir, and I'm afeard you'll be forced to put up wid my logic this time, too. You can't take more from the cat than her skin, you know."

There was an atrocious and sneering spirit, not only in this ruffian's manner, but in the tones of his voice, that was calculated to overcome human patience.

"Darby, we have let you run a long time, but I now tell you, there's an end of our forbearance so far as you are concerned. If you were not able to pay I could feel for you, but we know, and all the world knows, that you are one of the most comfortable and independent men in the parish. Darby, you are in short a d——d rogue, and what is worse, a treacherous and mischief-making scoundrel. I am aware of the language you use against our whole family, whom you blacken whenever you have an opportunity of doing so. You are not only dishonest but ungrateful, sirrah."

"No man has a betther right to be a judge, and a good judge of dishonesty, than your father's son," replied Hourigan. "Why didn't you call me an oppressor of the poor, and a blood-sucker?—why didn't you say I was a hard-hearted beggarly upstart, that rose from maneness and cheatery, and am now tyrannizin' over hundreds that's a thousand times betther than myself? Why don't you say that I'd sell my church and my religion to their worst enemies, and that for the sake of filthy lucre and blackguard upstart pride? I now come to tell you what we all think of you in this country, and what I believe some of us has tould you already—that you may go to hell for your tithe, and make the divil your paymaster, what he'll be yet. We will pay you none, and we set you and your upstart ould rogue of a father, with the law, the polis, and the army, all at defiance. I don't choose to say more, but I could if I liked."

Purcell's hunting-whip accidentally lay on the table at which he sat, but he did not take it up immediately after Hourigan had concluded. He quickly rose, however, and having closed the door and locked it, he let down the windows, and deliberately drew the blinds.

"Now, you scoundrel," he replied, taking up the whip, and commencing to flog Hourigan with all his strength, which was very great, "I will give you, by way of foretaste, a specimen of what a ruffian like you deserves when he is insolent."

With such singular energy, good will, and admirable effect did he lace Mr. Hourigan, that the latter worthy, after cutting some very antic capers, and exhibiting in a good many other respects several proofs of his agility that could scarcely be expected from his heavy and ungainly figure, was at last fairly obliged to sing out,—"Oh, Misther John, Misther John! you vill—Misther John, darlin', what do you mane, you murdh—oh, oh, d——n your soul—dear, what do you mane, Mr. John, dear? I say, what are you at? What do you baste me this way for—oh, may the divil—the Lord bless you, an' don't—here I am—here, Misther John, I ax your pardon—hell pursue—Misther John, darlin', I go down on my knees to you, an' axes your pardon—here now you see, I'm down.—Och murdher, am I to have the very sowl welted out o' me this way?"

Mr. John, having now satisfied himself, and left very visible marks of his attachment and good will to Hourigan, upon that individual's face and person, desired him to get up.

"Now, my good fellow," he exclaimed, "I trust I have taught you a lesson that you won't forget."

"No, Misther John," he replied, rising and rubbing himself in different parts of the body, as if to mitigate the pain which he felt; "no, I won't forget it—I won't by ———. It's a lesson I'll remember, and so will you."

"What do you mean, you cowardly villain?" asked Purcel, once more raising his whip. "You are threatening, are you."

"No, Misther John, not a bit o' that—divil a threat—me! I wouldn't threaten

you if there wasn't niver another man in Europe. Let me out, if you plaise—let me out, and may the div—the Lord love you!"

"Now," said the other, raising the blinds, and afterwards opening the door, "you may go about your business, and mark me, Mr. Hourigan—"

"I do, sir," replied the other, bolting out; "oh, God knows I do—*you* have *marked me*, Misther Purcel, and *I* will *mark you*, sir—for—" he added muttering in a low voice to those who stood about him—"one good turn desarves another, anyhow."

We shall not now dwell upon the comments which young Purcel's violence drew from the defaulters on their way home. Our reader, however, may easily imagine them, and form for themselves a presentiment of the length to which "the tithe insurrection," as they termed it, was likely to proceed throughout the country at large, with the exception only of the northern provinces.

CHAPTER V.

A Hang-Choice Shot—The "Garrison" on Short Commons.

When our merry friend the pedlar left the proctor's parlor, he proceeded at a brisk pace in the direction of the highway, which, however, was not less than three-quarters of a mile from Longshot Lodge, which was the name Purcel had given to his residence. He had only got clear of the offices, however, and was passing the garden wall, which ran between him and the proctor's whole premises, when he was arrested by Mogue Moylan.

"Ah! merry Mogue," exclaimed the pedlar, ironically, "I was missin' you. Where were you, my cherub?"

"I was in the barn 'ithin," replied Mogue, "just offerin' up a little pathernavy for the protection o' this house and place, and of the daicent, kind-hearted people that's in it."

"An', as a joint prayer, they say, is worth ten single ones, I suppose," returned the pedlar,—laying his fingers on his lips and winking—"you had—ahem—you understand?"

"No, thin," replied Mogue, brightening up with excessive vanity, "may I be happy if I do!"

"Why, our fair friend, Letty Lenehan—begad, Mogue, she's a purty girl that—says she to herself," proceeded the pedlar; "for I don't think she knew or thought I heard her—'If I thought he would like these ribbons, I'd buy them for myself.' 'Who do you mane, acushla?' says I, whisperin' to her. 'Who,' says she, 'but—but Mogue himself—only honor bright, Mr. Magrath,' says she, 'sure you wouldn't betray me?' 'Honor bright again,' says I, 'I'm not the stuff a traitor's made of;' and so you see we both laughed heartily, bekaise we understood one another. Mogue," proceeded the other, "will you answer me the truth in one thing?"

"If I can I will, Misther Magrath."

"I know ye will, bekaise *you can*," replied the pedlar; "how do you come round the girls at all? how do you make them fond o' you? I want you to tell me that, if it's not a family saicret."

Mogue gravely drew his fingers and thumb down his thin yellow jaws, until they met under his chin, and replied—

"It can't be tould, Misther Magrath; some men the women's naturally fond of, and some men they can't bear—throth it's like a free-mason's saicret, if you wor a man that the women wor naturally fond of you'd know it yourself, but not bein' that, Mr. Magrath, you could not understand it. It's born wid one, an' troth, a troublesome gift it is—for it *is* a gift—at least, I find it so. There's no keepin' the crathurs off o' you."

"Begad, you must be a happy man, Mogue. I wish I was like you—but whisper, man alive, why don't you look higher.

"How is that?" asked the other, now apparently awakened to a new interest.

"Mogue," said the pedlar, with something like solemnity of manner, "you and I are both embarked in the same ship, you know—we know how things are to go. I'm now provin' to you that I'm your friend. Listen; you passed through the back-yard to-day while I was in the parlor wid the family sellin' my goods as well as I could. Well, Miss Julia had a beautiful shawl about her purty shoulders, and as she seen you passin', she started, kept her eyes fixed upon you till you disappeared, and then, afther thinkin' for some time, she sighed deeply. Whisper, the thing flashed upon me—that's *that*, thought I, at any rate—and devil a doubt of it, you're safe there, or my name's not Andy Magrath, better known as the Cannie Soogah. Hurra, Mogue, more power!"

A richer comic study than Mogue's face could not possibly be depicted. His thin scraggy jaws—for cheeks he had none—were wrinkled and puckered into such a multiplicity of villanous folds and crevices, as could scarcely be paralleled on a human countenance; and what added to the ludicrous impression made, was the fact that he

endeavored to look—and, in fact, did so successfully—more like a man who felt that a secret long known to himself had been discovered, than a person to whom the intelligence had come for the first time.

"An', Misther Magrath," he replied, once more repeating the survey of his puckered jaws; "is it by way of information that you tould me that? That I mayn't sin, but you should be ever and always employed in carryin' coals to Newcastle. Troth, since you *have* broached the thing, I've known it this good while, and no one could tell you more about it, if I liked. Honor bright, however, as poor Letty said, troth, I pity that girl—but what can I do? no—no—honor bright, for ever!"

"Well, anyhow, now that we've thrown light upon what I noticed a while ago, let us talk about other matters. The house is still well armed and guarded, you say?"

"That I may die in grace, but it 'ud take me half an hour to reckon all the guns, pistols, and blunderbushes they have freshly loaded in the house every night."

"Well, couldn't you assist us, your'e *in* the house?"

"No—for I'm not *in* the house; they wouldn't allow any servant to sleep *in* the house for fear o' traichery, and they say so. If they'd let me sleep in the house, it 'ud be another thing; I might wet the powdher, and make their fire-arms useless; but sure they have lots of swords and bagnets, and daggers, and other instruments o' that kind that 'ud skiver one like a rabbit."

"Well, but you know all the outs and ins of the house, the rooms and passages, and everything that way so thoroughly, that one could depend upon your account of them."

"Depend upon them—ay, as well as you might upon the Gospel itself;—she was fond of M'Carthy, they say, and they think she is still; but, *be dhu husth*,* there's one that knows betther. You don't like M'Carthy?"

"To be sure I do, as the devil does holy wather."

"Well," proceeded Mogue, "I've a thing in my head about him—but sure he's in the black list as it is."

"Well, what is it you have in your head about him?"

Mogue shook it, but added, "Never mind, I'll think it over again, and when I'm made up on it, maybe I'll tell you. Don't we meet on this day week?"

"Sartainly, will you come?"

"I intend it, for the truth is, Misther Magrath, that the Millstone must be broke; that I may die in pace, but it must, an' any one that stands in the way of it must suffer. May I be happy, but they must."

The pedlar looked cautiously about him, and seeing that the coast was clear and no person visible, he thrust a letter into his hand, adding, "you may lave it in some place where the ould chap, or either of the sons, will be sure to find it. Maybe it'll tache them a little more civility to their neighbors."

Mogue looked at the document, and placing it securely in his pocket, asked, "Is it a notice?"

The other nodded in the affirmative, and added, with a knowing wink, "There's a coffin and a cross-bones in it, and the name is signed wid real blood, Mogue; and that's the way to go about breakin' the Millstone, my man."

"That I may never do an ill turn, but it is. Well, God bless you, Misther Magrath, an' whisper now, don't forget an odd patther-anavy goin' to bed, in hopes that God will prosper our honest endayvours. That was a hard thing upon young Devlin in Murray's murdher. I'm not sure whether you do, but I know that *that* act was *put upon* him through ill-will; and now he'll hang for it. But sure it's one comfort that he'll die a martyr, glory be to God!"

The pedlar, having assented to this, got on his pack, and leaving Mogue to meditate on the new discovery which he had made respecting Julia Purcel, he proceeded on towards the highway to which we have alluded.

Purcel himself, in the course of a few miles' drive, reached the parsonage, in which the Rev. Jeremiah Turbot ought to have lived, but in which, for several years past, he had not resided; if we except about a fortnight twice a year, when he came to sweep off as weighty a load of tithes as he could contrive to squeeze out of the people through worthy Mat Purcel, his proctor.

For a year or two previous to this visit, there is no doubt but the aspect of ecclesiastical affairs was gradually getting worse. Turbot began to feel that there was something wrong, although he could not exactly say what it was. Purcel, however, was by no means reluctant to disclose to him the exceedingly desperate state to which not only had matters been driving, but at which they had actually arrived. This, in truth, was our worthy proctor's version of ecclesiastical affairs, for at least two years before the present period of our narrative. But, like every man who tampers with simple truth, he began to perceive, almost when it was too late, that his policy in antedating the tithe difficulties was likely very soon to

* Hold your tongue.

embarrass himself; and to deprive the outrages resulting from the frightful opposition that was organized against tithes of all claim to novelty. He had, in fact, so strongly exaggerated the state of the country, and surcharged his pictures of anti-tithe violence, so much beyond all truth and reality, that when the very worst and most daring organization did occur, he could do nothing more than go over the same ground again. The consequence was, that worthy Turbot, so long habituated to these overdrawn narratives, began to look upon them as the friends of the boy who shouted out "wolf!" did upon the veracity of his alarms. He set down his intrepid and courageous proctor as nothing else than a cowardly poltroon, whose terrors exaggerated everything, and whose exaggerated accounts of fraud, threats, and violence had existed principally in his own imagination. Such were the circumstances under which Purcel and Dr. Turbot now met.

The worthy rector of Ballysoho was a middle-sized man, with coal-black hair, brilliant, twinkling eyes of the same color, and as pretty a double chin as ever graced the successor of an apostle. Turbot was by no means an offensive person; on the contrary, he must of necessity have been very free from evil or iniquity of any kind, inasmuch as he never had *time* to commit sin. He was most enthusiastically addicted to hunting and shooting, and felt such a keen and indomitable relish for the good things of this world, especially for the luxuries of the table, that what between looking after his *cuisine*, attending his dogs, and enjoying his field sports, he scarcely ever might be said to have a single day that he could call his own. And yet, unreasonable people expected that a man whose daily occupations were of such importance to—himself, should very coolly forego his own beloved enjoyments in order to attend to the comforts of the poor, with whom he had scarcely anything in common. Many other matters of a similar stamp were expected from him, but only by those who had no opportunity of knowing the multiplicity of his engagements. Such persons were unreasonable enough to think that he ought to have occasionally appropriated some portion of his income to the relief of poverty and destitution, but as he said himself, he could not afford it. How could any man afford it who in general lived up to, and sometimes beyond, his income, and who was driven to such pinches as not unfrequently to incur the imputation of severity and oppression itself, by the steps he was forced to take or sanction for the recovery of his tithes.

In person he was, as we have said, about or somewhat under the middle size. In his gait he was very ungainly. When walking, he drove forward as if his head was butting or boring its way through a palpable atmosphere, keeping his person, from the waist up, so far in advance that the *a posteriori* portion seemed as if it had been detached from the other, and was engaged in a ceaseless but ineffectual struggle to regain its position; or, in shorter and more intelligible words, the latter end of him seemed to be perpetually in pursuit of his head and shoulders, without ever being able to overtake them. Whilst engaged in maintaining this compound motion, his elbows and arms swung from right to left, and *vice versa*, very like the movements of a weaver throwing the shuttle from side to side. Turbot had one acknowledged virtue in a pre-eminent degree, we mean hospitality. It is true he gave admirable dinners, but it would be a fact worth boasting of, to find any man at his table who was not able to give, and who did give, better dinners than himself. The doctor's face, however, in spite of his slinging and ungainly person, was upon the whole rather good. His double chin, and the full, rosy expression of his lips and mouth, betokened, at the very least, the force of luxurious habits, and, as a hedge school-master of our acquaintance used to say, the smallest taste in life of voluptuosity; whilst from his black, twinkling eyes, that seemed always as if they were about to herald a jest, broke forth, especially when he conversed with the softer sex, something which might be considered as holding a position between a laugh and a leer. Such was the Rev. Jeremiah Turbot, to whom we shall presently take the liberty of introducing the reader.

The parsonage, to which our friend Purcel is now making his approach, was an excellent and comfortable building. It stood on a very pretty eminence, and consequently commanded a beautiful prospect both in front and rear; for the fact was, that in consequence of the beauty of the scenery for miles about it, some incumbent of good taste had given it a second hall door, thus enabling the inhabitants to partake of a double enjoyment, by an equal facility of contemplating the exquisite scenery of the country both in front and rear. A beautiful garden lay facing the south, and a little below, in the same direction, stood a venerable old rookery, whilst through the rich, undulating fields flowed, in graceful windings, a beautiful river, on whose green and fertile banks sheep and black cattle were always to be seen, sometimes feeding or chewing the cud in that indolent repose which gives to the landscape, in the golden light of a summer's evening, such a poetical and pastoral effect.

Purcel, on coming in sight of the parsonage, instead of keeping his horse to the rapid pace at which he had driven him along until then, now drew him up, and advanced at a rate which seemed to indicate anything but that of a man whose spirits were cheerful or free from care. On reaching the front entrance he dismounted very slowly, and with a solemn and melancholy air, walked deliberately, step by step, till he stood at the hall door, where he gave a knock so spiritless, depressed, and disconsolate, that it immediately communicated itself, as was intended, to the usually joyful and rosy countenance of the rector, who surveyed his agent as if he expected to hear that he either had lost, or was about to lose, half his family or the whole of his wealth.

"How do you do, Purcel?—eh, what's this? Is there anything wrong? You look very much dejected—what's the matter? Sit down."

"Thank you, sir; but I really do not think I am well—at least my spirits are a great deal depressed; but indeed, Dr. Turbot, a man must be more or less than a man to be able to keep up his spirits in such times."

"Oh, ho, my worthy proctor, is that all? Thank you for nothing, Purcel. I understand you; but you ought to know I am not to be caught now by your '*calamities.*'"

"My calamities! I declare to goodness, Dr. Turbot, I could rest contented if they were nobody's calamities but my own; unfortunately, however, you are as deep in them as I am, and in a short time, God knows, we will be a miserable pair, I fear."

"Not at all, Purcel—this is only the old story. Raw-heads and bloody-bones coming to destroy the tithes, and eat up the parsons. Let me see—it is now three years since you commenced these 'lamentations.'"

"Three years ago; why we had peace and quietness then compared to what we have at present," replied Purcel.

"And what have we now, pray?"

"Why, sir, the combinations against tithes is quite general over the whole country."

"Well; so was it then upon your own showing. Go on."

"As I said, sir, it was nothing at that time. There is little now but threatening notices that breathe of blood and murder."

"Very good; so was it then upon your own showing. Go on."

"But of late, sir, lives have been taken. Clergymen have been threatened and fired at."

"Very good; so was it then upon your own showing. Go on, I say."

"Fired at I say, and shot, sir. The whole White boy system has turned itself into a great tithe conspiracy. The farmers, the landholders of all descriptions, the cottiers, the daily laborers, and the very domestic servants, have all joined this conspiracy, and sworn neither to pay tithes themselves nor to allow others to pay them. They compare the established church to a garrison, and although the law prevents them from openly destroying it by force, they swear that *they'll starve it out.*"

"Eh!" said Turbot, starting, "what's that you say? Starve us out! What an infamous and unconstitutional project! What a diabolical procedure! But I forgot—bravo, Purcel! This was all the case before upon your own showing."

"Well, sir," returned Purcel, "there was at least this difference, that I was able to get something out of them then, but devil a copper can I get out o' them now. I think you'll admit, sir, that this fact gives some weight to my argument."

"You don't mean to say, Purcel," replied the other, from whose chin the rosy tint gradually paled away until it assumed that peculiar hue which is found inside of a marine shell, that is to say, white with a dream of red barely and questionably visible; "you don't mean to say, my good friend Purcel, that you have no money for me on this occasion?"

"By no means, sir," replied the proctor. "Money I have got for you, no doubt—money I have got certainly."

The double chin once more assumed its natural hue of "celestial rosy red."

"Upon my honor, Purcel," he replied, "I have not temper for this; it seems to me that you take particular delight in wantonly tampering with my feelings. I am really quite tired of it. Why harass and annoy me with your alarms? Conspiracy, blood, and massacre are the feeblest terms in your vocabulary. It is absolutely ridiculous, sir, and I beg you will put an end to it."

"I would be very glad to do so, sir," replied Purcel; "and still more satisfied if I had never had anything to do with the temporalities of your church."

"I don't see why, above all men living, you should say so, Purcel; you have feathered your nest tolerably well by the temporalities of our church."

"If I have, sir," replied the proctor, "it has been at the expense of my popularity and good name. I and my family are looked upon as a part and parcel of your system, and, I may add, as the worst and most odious

part of it. I and they are looked upon as the bitterest enemies of the people; and because we endeavor to get out of them the means of enabling you to maintain your rank in the world, we are obliged to hear ourselves branded every day in the week as villains, oppressors, and blood-suckers. This, however, we could bear; but to know that we are marked down for violence, brutality, and, if possible, assassination, is a penalty for which nothing in your establishment could compensate us. I and my sons have received several notices of violence in every shape, and we are obliged to sleep with our house half filled with arms and ammunition, in dread of an attack every night in the year."

"Well, well," replied Turbot, "this, after all, is but the old story; the matter is only an ebullition, and will pass away. I know you are constitutionally timid. I know you are; and have in fact a great deal of the natural coward in your disposition; and I say natural, because a man is no more to be blamed for being born a coward than he is for being born with a bad complexion or an objectionable set of features. You magnify the dangers about you, and, in fact, become a self-tormentor. As for my part, I am glad you have got money, for I do assure you, I never stood so much in need of it in my life."

"The very papers, sir," continued Purcel, who could not prevent himself from proceeding, "might enable you to see the state of the country."

"Oh, d——n the papers," said the parson, "I am sick of them. Our side is perpetually exaggerating matters—just as you are; and as for the other side, your papist rags I never, of course, see or wish to see. I want six hundred now, or indeed eight if you can, and I had some notion of taking a day or two's shooting. How is the game on the glebe? Has it been well preserved, do you know?"

"I am not aware," said the proctor, "that any one has shot over the glebe lands this season; but if you take my advice, sir, you will expose yourself as little as you can in the neighborhood. There are not two individuals in the parish so unpopular as Dr. Turbot and your humble servant."

"In that case, then," replied the other, "the less delay I make here the better—you can let me have six hundred, I hope?"

"I certainly told you, sir," replied Purcel, with something of a determined and desperate coolness about him, "that I had money for you, and so I have."

"Thank you, Purcel; I must say you certainly have, on all occasions, exerted yourself faithfully and honestly in support of my interests."

"Money, sir," pursued the other, without appearing to look to the right or to the left, "I have for you. Would you venture to guess to what amount?"

"Well, under the circumstances you speak of, less, I dare say, than I expect."

"I have been able to get, within the last six months, exactly fifty-nine pounds thirteen and sevenpence!"

If the ebb which we have described before, of the blood from the doctor's double chin, was a gradual one, we can assure the reader that, in this case, it was rapid in proportion to the terror and dismay conveyed by this authentic, but astounding piece of intelligence. The whole face became pale, his eyes at once lost their lustre, and were, as he fixed them in astonishment upon the proctor, completely without speculation; his voice became tremulous, and, as he pulled out his handkerchief to wipe away the unexpected perspiration which the proctor's words had brought out upon his forehead, his hands trembled as if he had been suddenly seized with palsy. In truth, Purcel, who had a kind of good-natured regard for the little man, felt a sensation of compassion for him, on witnessing the extraordinary distress under which he labored.

"I am sorry for this," said he, "for I really know not what is to be done, and, what is equally distressing, our prospects are not at all likely to improve."

"You don't mean to say, Purcel, that circumstances are as bad as you report them—as bad—as desperate, I should say—and as ruinous?"

"I fear," said Purcel, "they go beyond the gloomiest and most desponding views you could take of them. The conspiracy, for such we must term it, is, in point of fact, deepening down to the very foundations, if I may use the expression, of society. Every day it is becoming more dangerous and alarming; but how it is to be checked or mitigated, or how we are to stand out of its way and avoid its consequences, heaven only knows, for I don't."

"But, Purcel, my dear friend, what am I and my domestic establishment to do? Good God! there is nothing but ruin before us! You know I always lived up to my income—indeed, at best, it was too limited for the demands of my family, and our habits of life. And now, to have the very prop—the only one on which I leant—suddenly snapt from under me—it is frightful. But you are to blame, Purcel; you are much to blame. Why did you not apprise me of this ruinous state of things before it came thus on me

unawares? It was unfeeling and heartless in you not to have prepared me for it."

The proctor actually imagined, and not without reason, that the worthy doctor was beginning to get beside himself, as it is termed, on hearing such a charge as this brought against *him;* and he was about to express his astonishment at it, when Mr. Temple, his curate, who resided in the parsonage, made his appearance, and joined them at Dr. Turbot's request.

"Temple," said he, as the latter portion of his body began to pursue the other through the room, "are you aware of the frightful condition to which the country has come?"

"Who can be ignorant of it?" replied Temple; "how can any man live in the country, and not know it?"

"Yes, sir," replied Turbot, tartly, "I have lived in the country, and, until a few minutes ago, I was ignorant of the extent to which it has come."

"Well, sir," said Temple, "that is odd enough; for, to my own knowledge, your information has been both regular and authentic upon this subject at all events. Our friend Purcel, here, has not left you in ignorance of it."

"Yes," said Turbot, "but he had the country as bad three years ago as it is now. Was this fair? Why, I took it for granted that all his alarms and terrors were the mere play and subterfuge of the proctor upon the parson, and, consequently, thought little of it; but here I am stranded at once, wrecked, and left on my bottom. How will I meet my tradesmen? how will I continue my establishment? and, what is worse, how can I break it up? You know, Temple, I cannot, unfortunately, live without luxuries. They are essential to my health, and if suddenly deprived of them, as I am likely to be, I cannot answer to society for the consequences."

"Sir," said Temple, "it is quite obvious that a period of severe trial and chastening is at hand, or I should rather say, has already arrived. Many of our calling, I am grieved to know, are even now severely suffering, and suffering, I must add, with unexampled patience and fortitude under great and trying privations. Yet I trust that the health of the general body will be improved by it, and purged of the grossness and worldly feeling which have hitherto, I fear, too much characterized it. Many, I know, may think we are merely in the hands of man, but for my part, I think, and earnestly hope, that we are in those of God himself, and that He chasteneth no only because He loveth."

"This is most distressing to hear, my dear Temple," replied his rector; "but I trust I am as willing and as well prepared, from religious feeling, to suffer as another—that is, provided always I am not deprived of those comforts and little luxuries to which I have all my life been accustomed."

"I am very much afraid," observed Purcel, "that the clergy of the established church will have a very fine opportunity to show the world how well and patiently they can suffer."

"I have already said, Purcel," said the doctor, "that I am as willing to suffer as another. I know I am naturally of a patient and rather an humble disposition; let these trials come then, and I am prepared for them, provided only that I am not deprived of my little luxuries, for these are essential to my health itself, otherwise I could bear even this loss. I intended, Temple, to have had a day or two's shooting on the glebe lands, but Purcel, here, tells me that I am very unpopular, and would not, he says, recommend me to expose myself much, or if possible at all, in the neighborhood.

"And upon my word and credit I spoke nothing," replied the other, "but what I know to be truth. There is not a feather of game on the glebe lands that would be shot down with half the pleasure that the parson himself would. I beg, then, Dr. Turbot, that you won't think of it. I'll get my sons to go over the property, and if there's any game on it we shall have it sent to you."

"How does it stand for game, Temple, do you know?"

"I really cannot say," replied the good man. "The killing of game is a pursuit I have never relished, and with which I am utterly unacquainted. I fear, however, that the principal game in the country will soon be the parson and the proctor."

"It's a delightful pursuit," replied the Rev. Doctor, who did not at all relish the last piece of information, and only replied to the first, "and equally conducive to health and morals. What, for instance, can be more delicious than a plump partridge or grouse, stewed in cinnamon and claret? and yet, to think that a man must be deprived of—well," said he, interrupting himself, "it is a heavy, and awful dispensation—and one that I ought to have been made acquainted with—that is, to its full and fearful extent—before it came on me thus unawares. Purcel here scarcely did his duty by me in this."

"I fear, sir," replied Temple, "that it was not Purcel who neglected his duty, but you who have been incredulous. I think he has certainly not omitted to sound the alarm sufficiently loud during the approach

of this great ordeal to which we are exposed."

"And in addition to everything else, I am in arrears to you, Temple," he added; "and now I have no means of paying you."

Temple was silent, for at that moment the necessities of his family pressed with peculiar severity upon himself—and he was not exactly prepared for such an intimation. The portion of salary then coming to him was, in truth, his sole dependence at that peculiar crisis, and this failing him, he knew not on what hand or in what direction to turn.

After musing for some time, he at length replied, "If you have it not, Dr. Turbot, or cannot procure it, of course it is idle for me to expect it—although I will not deny, that in the present circumstances of my family, it would have come to us with very peculiar and seasonable relief."

"But I have not a pound," replied the doctor; "so far from that, I am pretty deeply in debt—for I need hardly say, that for years I have been balancing my affairs—paying off debts to-day, and contracting other to-morrow—always dipped, but and rather deeply, too, as I said."

He again got to his legs, when the pursuit of the latter part of his person after the rest once more took place, and in this odd way he traversed the room in a state of extreme tribulation.

"What is to be done?" he asked—"surely the government cannot abandon us?—cannot allow us to perish utterly, which we must do, if left to the mercy of our enemies? No, certainly it cannot desert us in such a strait as this, unless it wishes to surrender the established church to the dark plots and designing ambition of popery. No, no—it cannot—it must not—it dares not. Some vigorous measure for our relief must be taken, and that speedily;—let us not be too much dejected, then—our sufferings will be short—and as for myself, I am willing to make any reasonable sacrifice, provided I am not called upon—at these years—fifty-eight—to give up my usual little luxuries. Purcel, I want you to take a turn in the garden. Temple, excuse me—will you?—and say to Mrs. Temple to make no preparations, as I don't intend to stop—I shall return to Dublin in an hour at farthest; and don't be cast down, Temple; matters will soon brighten."

"It is not at all necessary, sir," replied Temple, "that you should adjoin to the garden to speak with Mr. Purcel. I was on my way to the library when I met you, and I am going there now."

"It is not so much," he replied, "that I have anything *very* particular to say to Purcel, as that I feel a walk in the fresh air will relieve me. Good-bye, then, for a little; I shall see you before I go."

"Now, Purcel," said he, when they had reached the garden, "this, after all, is only a false alarm, or even if it be not, we know that the government could by no means afford to abandon the established church in Ireland, because that would be, in other words, to reject the aid of, and sever themselves from all connection with, the whole Protestant party; and you, as a man of sense, Purcel, need not be told that it is only by the existence of a Protestant party in this country that they are enabled to hold it in union with England at all."

"But what has that to do with our present distresses?" said the proctor, who, as he probably began to anticipate the doctor's ultimate object in this conversation, very shrewdly associated himself rather in an official spirit with the embarrassments of his friend, and the church in general.

"It has considerably," replied Dr. Turbot; "for instance, there will be no risk whatsoever, in lending to many of the embarrassed clergy sums of money upon their personal security, until this pressure passes away, and their prosperity once more returns."

"Oh, ho, doctor," thought his sharp and wily companion, "I believe I have you now, Well, Dr. Turbot," he replied, "I think the case, even as you put it, will be attended with difficulties. What, for instance, is personal security from a poor or a ruined man? very little, or rather nothing. Still it is possible that many, relying upon the proverbial honor and integrity of the Irish Protestant clergy, may actually lend money upon this security. But then," he added, with a smile, "those who will, must belong to a peculiar and privileged class."

"Why," asked Turbot, "to what class do you allude?"

"To one with which," said the proctor, "I unfortunately have no connection—I mean the class that can afford to lend it."

"Purcel," said Dr. Turbot, "I am sorry to hear this ungenerous observation from you; I did not expect it."

"Why do you call it ungenerous, sir?" asked Purcel.

"Because," replied Turbot, it is obvious that it was made in anticipation of a favor which I was about to ask of you."

"If I can grant you any favor," replied the proctor, "I shall be most happy to do so;—if you will only let me know what it is."

"You must be particularly dull not to perceive it," replied the parson, "aware, as you

are, of the unexpected state of my circumstances. In short, I want you to assist me with a few hundreds."

The proctor, after a pause, replied, "You place me in circumstances of great difficulty, sir; I am indeed anxious to oblige you, but I know not whether I can do so with honor, without violating my good faith to another party."

"I don't understand you," said Turbot.

"Then I shall explain it," replied Purcel; "the sum I can command is one of four hundred, which is at this moment virtually lent upon excellent security, at an interest of eight per cent. The loan is certainly not legally completed, but morally and in point of honor it is. Now, if I lend this money to you, sir, I must break my word and verbal agreement to the party in question."

"Very well, sir," replied the rector, who, notwithstanding the love he bore his "little luxuries," was scrupulously honorable in all money transactions, "don't attempt to break word, or to violate good faith with any man; and least of all, on my account. I presume I shall be able to raise the money somewhere else."

Purcel, who had uniformly found the doctor a sharp, but correct man in matters of business, and who knew besides the severe pressure under which he labored at the moment, was not exactly prepared to hear from him the expression of a principle so high-minded. He paused again for some time, during which he reasoned with himself somewhat to the following effect:—"I did not expect this from the worthy doctor, but I did, that he would at once have advised me to break the agreement I mentioned and lend himself the money. I cannot think there will be much risk in lending such a man a few hundreds, especially as no such agreement as I allude to exists." He then replied as follows:—

"Doctor," he proceeded, "I have been thinking over this matter; I know you want the money, and I am sorry for it. That I have myself been a gainer by my connection with you, I will not attempt to deny, and I do not think that I should be grateful or a sincere friend to you, if I saw you now in such grievous and unexpected embarrassments without making an effort to assist you. You shall have the four hundred, if you consent to the same rate of interest I was about to receive for it from the other party."

"Then you will break faith with him," replied the doctor. "I thank you, Purcel, but I will not have it."

"I break no faith with him," replied the proctor; "he was bound to have let me know, on yesterday, whether he would require the money or not, for the matter was conditional; but as I have not yet heard from him, I hold myself at liberty to act as I wish. The fault is his own."

"And on these conditions, so you are; well, thank you again, Purcel, I accept this money on your terms, eight per cent. Nay, you oblige me very much; indeed you do."

"Well, then, that matter is settled," said the proctor, "do not speak of it," he proceeded, in reply to the doctor's last observation; "I should indeed be unworthy either of your good opinion or my own, if I held aloof from you just now. I will have a bond prepared in a day or two, but in the meantime, if you will call at my house, you may have the money home with you."

The doctor once more thanked him, and they were in the act of returning to the house, when the noise of a pistol was heard, and at the same moment a bullet whistled right between them, and so close to each that it was utterly impossible to say at which of the two individuals the murderous aim had been taken. The garden, a large one and highly walled in, was entered by two gates, one of which led into the back yard, the other into a corner of the lawn that was concealed from the house by a clump of trees. The latter gate, which was not so large as the other, had in it a small iron grating a little above the centre, through which any one could command a view of the greater portion of the garden. It was through this gate they had entered, and as no apprehension of any attempt of assassination had existed in the mind of either, they left the key in the outside, not having deemed it at all necessary to secure the door, by locking it within.

The proctor, to whose cowardice the worthy clergyman had not long before paid so sincere, but by no means so flattering a tribute, did not wait to make even a single observation, but ran with all his speed towards the gate, which, to his surprise and mortification, he found locked on the outside. Apprehensive, however, of a second attack, he beckoned to his companion to hasten towards the other gate, which was not visible from that through which the shot had been fired, and in the meantime, he himself ran also towards it, in order to try whether it might not be possible to get some view or trace of the assassin. He had a case of pistols in his hand, for we ought to have told the reader that neither he nor his sons ever traveled unarmed, and on reaching the back-yard, he was obliged to make a considerable circuit ere he arrived at the spot from which the shot had been fired. Here, however, he found no mark or vestige of a human being, but saw at a glance that the assassin, in order to

secure time for escape, had locked the door, and either taken the key with him or thrown it where it could not be found. It was in vain that he ran in all directions, searched every place likely to conceal the villain; not a clump of trees or ornamental shrubs remained unexamined. The search, however, was fruitless. No individual was seen, nor any clue gained on which even a conjecture could be founded. The only individual visible was our friend the *Cannie Soogah*, whose loud and mellow song was the first thing that drew their attention to him, as he came up a back avenue that led by a private and winding walk round to the kitchen-door. Purcel, on seeing him, signed hastily with his hand that he should approach, which the other, observing the unusual agitation betrayed by his gesture, immediately did at a pace considerably quickened.

"Here, Cannie," he shouted out to him, ere he had time to approach, "here has been an attempt at murder by some cold-blooded and cowardly assassin, who has, I fear, escaped us!"

"Murdher!" exclaimed the pedlar, "the Lord save and guard us!—for there's nothin' but murdher in my ears! go where I will of late, it's nothin' but bloodshed;—sure I cannot sing my harmless bit of a song along the road, but I'm stopped wid an account of some piece o' murdher or battherry, or God knows what. An' who was near gettin' it now, Misther Purcel? Not yourself, I pray Jasus this day!"

"I really cannot say, Cannie; Dr. Turbot and I were walking in the garden, when some damnable villain discharged a pistol from the gate here, and the bullet of it whistled right between us both."

"Whistled, did it!—hell resave it for one bullet, it was fond of mirth it was; and you can't say which o' you it was whistling for?"

"No, how could I?—it was equally near us both."

"Bad cess for ever saize him for a murdherin' villain, whoever he was. You have no notion, Masther Purcel, darlin', where he went to?"

"Not the slightest, Cannie; the villain wouldn't have got off so easily, only that he had the diabolical cunning to lock the gate outside and conceal the key: so that whilst I was coming round to the place, he escaped. Did you meet or see nobody yourself?"

The pedler shut his right hand, slapped it quickly into the palm of his left. "By the Lomenty tarry," he exclaimed, "I seen the villain! By the high horicks, I seen the very man, if I have an eye in my head! A big, able-bodied villain, wid a pair of thumpin' black whiskers that you might steal my own out of—and I don't think I can complain myself. He was comin' up the road from the Carr, and he was turnin' over towards the bridge there below, so that I only got a short glimpse of him; and faix, sure enough, as he passed the bridge, I seen him throw something over the wall of it into the river, which I'd lay my head against the three kingdoms was the kay o' the gate."

The proctor paused a little, and then observed, "Ay, faith! I'm sure you're right, Cannie; I've heard of that villain, and know him from your description. He is the cowardly ruffian who's said to be at the head or bottom of these secret combinations that are disgracing and destroying the country. Yes, I've heard of him."

"And what did you hear, Misther Purcel?" asked the pedlar, with undisguised curiosity.

"No matter now, Cannie; I haven't time to bestow upon the murdering ruffian: I have my eye on him, however, and so have others. Indeed, I'm rather inclined to think the hemp has already grown that will hang him. What dress had he on?"

"Why, sir, he had on a whitish frieze coat, wid big brown buttons; but there could be no mistakin' the size of his murderin' *red* whiskers."

"Red whiskers!—why, you said a moment ago that they were black."

"Black! hut tut, no, Misther Purcel, I couldn't say that; devil such a pair of red thumpers ever I seen, barin' upon Rousin' Redhead that was sent across—for—for—buildin' churches—ha! ha! ha!"

"Why, I'd take my oath you said black," rejoined the proctor—"that is, if I have ears to my head."

"Troth, an' you have Misther Purcel, as brave a pair as a man could boast of; but the truth is, you wor so much feflustered wid alarm, and got altogether so much through other, that you didn't know what I said."

"I did perfectly: you said distinctly that he had black whiskers."

"Red, by the hokey, over the world; however, to avoid an argument, even if I did, in mistake, say black, the whiskers were red in the mane time; an', as I sed, barrin' Rousin' Redhead's, that was thransported, a never laid my eyes on so red, nor so big I pair."

"He can't be the fellow I suspect, then—for his, by all accounts, are unusually large and black."

"As to that, I can't say, sir: but you wouldn't have me give a wrong description

of any villain that 'ud make an attempt upon your life. Are you sure, though, it wasn't his reverend honor that the pistol was aimed at?"

"I am not; as I told you, it is impossible to settle that point. There is neither of us very popular, certainly."

"Bekaise, afther all, there is a difference; and it doesn't folly that, although I'd purshue the villain for life and death, that 'ud attempt to murdher *you*, that I'd distress myself to secure an honest man that might free us an' the country from the like o' him;" and he pointed over his left shoulder with his inverted thumb.

"Cannie," said the proctor, somewhat sternly, "I've never heard you give expression to such sentiments before, and I hope I shall never again. No honest man would excuse or tamper with murder or murderers. No more of this, Cannie, or you will lose my good opinion, although perhaps you would think that no great loss."

"Throth, I know I was wrong to spake as I did, sir, bad cess to me, but I was, an' as for your good opinion, Misther Purcel, and the good of all your family too, devil a man livin' 'ud go further to gain it, and to keep it when he had it than I would; now, bad cess to the one."

Whilst this dialogue was proceeding between the pedlar and the proctor, Dr. Turbot, in a state of indescribable alarm, was relating the attempted assassination to his curate inside. The amazement of the latter gentleman, who was perfectly aware of the turbulent state of the country, by no means kept pace with the alarm of his rector. He requested of the latter, that should he see Mrs. Temple, he would make no allusions to the circumstance, especially as she was at the period in question not far from her confinement, and it was impossible to say what unpleasant or dangerous effects an abrupt mention of so dreadful a circumstance might have upon her.

In a few minutes Purcel and his patron were on their way to Longshot Lodge, the residence of the proctor. At the solicitation of the parson, however, they avoided the direct line of road, and reached home by one that was much more circuitous, and as the latter thought also more safe. Here, after waiting for the arrival of the mail coach, which he resolved to meet on its way to the metropolis, he partook of a lunch, which, even to his voluptuous palate, was one that he could not but admit to be excellent. He received four hundred pounds from the proctor, for which he merely gave him a note of hand, and in a short time was on his way to the metropolis.

CHAPTER VI.

Unexpected Generosity—A False Alarm.

At this period, notwithstanding the circumstances which we have just related—and they were severe enough—the distress of the Protestant clergy of Ireland was just only beginning to set in. It had not, as yet, however, assumed anything like that formidable shape in which it subsequently appeared. To any scourge so dreadful, no class in the educated and higher ranks of society had been, within the records of historical recollection, ever before subjected. Still, like a malignant malady, even its first symptoms were severe, and indicative of the sufferings by which, with such dreadful certainty, they were followed.

On that day, and at the very moment when the mysterious attempt at assassination, which we have recorded, was made, Dr. Turbot's worthy curate, on returning home from the neighboring village of Lisnagola, was, notwithstanding great reluctance on his part, forced into the following conversation with his lovely but dejected wife:

"Charles," said she, fixing her large, tearful eyes upon him, with a look in which love, anxiety, and sorrow were all blended, "I fear you have not been successful in the village. Has Moloney refused us?"

"Only conditionally, my dear Maria—that is, until our account is paid up—but for the present, and perhaps for a little longer, we must deny ourselves these 'little luxuries,'" and he accompanied the words with a melancholy smile. "Tea and sugar and white bread are now beyond our reach, and we must be content with a simpler fare."

Mrs. Temple, on looking at their children, could scarcely refrain from tears; but she knew her husband's patience and resignation, and felt that it was her duty to submit with humility to the dispensation of God.

"You and I, my dear Charles, could bear up under anything—but these poor things, how will they do?"

"That reflection is only natural, my dear Maria; but it is spoken, dearest, only like a parent, who probably loves too much and with an excess of tenderness. Just reflect, darling, upon the hundreds of thousands of children in our native land, who live healthily and happily without ever having tasted either tea or loaf-bread at all; and think, besides, dearest, that there are, in the higher circles, a great number of persons whose children are absolutely denied these comforts, by advice of their physicians. Our natural wants, my dear Maria, are but simple, and easily satisfied; it is wealth and luxury only that

corrupt and vitiate them. In this case, then, dearest, the Christian must speak, and act, and feel as well as the parent. You understand me now, love, and that is sufficient. I have not succeeded in procuring anything for you or them, but you may rest assured that God will not desert us."

"Yes, dear Charles," replied his wife, whose black mellow eyes beamed with joy; "all that is true, but you forgot that Dr. Turbot has arrived to receive his tithes, and you will now receive your stipend. That will carry us out of our present difficulty at least."

"My dear Maria, it is enough to say that Dr. Turbot is in a position immeasurably more distressed and dreadful than ours. Purcel, his proctor, has been able to receive only about fifty pounds out of his usual half-yearly income of eight hundred. From him we are to expect nothing at present. I know not, in fact, how he and his family will bear this dreadful privation; for dreadful it must be to those who have lived in the enjoyment of such luxuries."

"That is indeed dreadful to such a family, and I pity them from my heart," replied his wife; "but, dearest Charles, what are we to do?—except a small crust of bread, there is no food in the house for either them or you."

As she uttered the words their eyes met, and his gentle and soothing Maria, who had been sitting beside him, threw herself upon his bosom—he clasped his arms around her—pressed her with melancholy affection to his heart, and they both wept together.

At length he added, "But you think not of yourself, my Maria."

"I!" she replied; "ah! what am I? Anything, you know, will suffice for me—but you and they, my dearest Charles—and then poor Lilly, the servant; but, dearest," she exclaimed, with a fresh, and if possible, a more tender embrace, "I am not at all repining—I am happy with you—happy, happy—and never, never, did I regret the loss of my great and powerful friends less than I do at this moment, which enables me to see and appreciate the virtues and affection to which my heart is wedded, and which I long since appreciated."

Her husband forced a smile, and kissed her with an air of cheerfulness.

"Pardon me," he said, "dearest Maria, for two or three minutes I wish to go to the library to make a memorandum. I will soon return."

He then left her, after a tender embrace, and retired, as he said, to the library, where, smote to the heart by his admiration of her affection and greatness of mind, he sat down, and whilst he reflected on the destitution to which he had brought the granddaughter of an earl, he wept bitterly for several minutes.

It was from this peculiar state of feeling, that he was called upon to hear an account of the attempted assassination, with which the reader is already acquainted.

Our friend, the *Cannie Soogah*, having taken the town of Lisnagola on his way, in order to effect some sales with one of those general country merchants on a somewhat small scale, that are to be found in almost every country town, happened to be sitting in a small back-parlor, when a certain conversation took place between Mr. Temple and Molony, the proprietor of the establishment to which we have just alluded. He heard the dialogue, we say, and saw that the mild and care-worn curate had been, not rudely certainly, but respectfully, yet firmly, refused further credit. By whatever spirit prompted it is not for us to say; at all events he directed his footsteps to the glebe, and—but it is unnecessary to continue the description, or rather to repeat it. The reader is already aware of what occurred until the departure of Dr. Turbot and the proctor.

Temple, having seen them depart, walked out for a little, in order to compose his mind, and frame, if possible, some project for the relief of his wife and children. In the meantime, our jolly pedlar, having caught a glimpse of Mrs. Temple at the parlor window, presented himself, and begged to know if she were inclined to make any purchases. She nodded him a gentle and ladylike refusal, upon which he changed his ground, and said, "Maybe, ma'am, if you're not disposed to buy, that you'd have something you'd like to part wid. If you have, ma'am, bad cess to the purtier purchaser you'd meet wid—shawls or trinkets, or anything that way—I mane, ma'am," he added, "things that arn't of any use to you—an' I'm the boy that will shell out the ready money, and over the value."

Mrs Temple had known little—indeed nothing—of the habits of such a class as that to which our gay friend belonged; but be this as it may, his last words struck her quickly and forcibly.

"Do you make purchases, then?" she said.

"I do, ma'am, plaise your honor," replied the pedlar.

"Stop a moment, then," she replied. "I have some superfluous articles of dress that I may dispose of."

The whole mother rushed into her heart at the thought; the tender and loving wife forgot everything but the means of obtaining food for her husband and children. She went to her dressing-room, and in a few

minutes returned, accompanied by Lilly Stewart, her own servant-maid previous to her marriage, to whom their recent distresses had been no secret, and who was deeply and deservedly in the confidence of the family.

Whilst she was absent in her dressing-room, the pedlar resumed his song, as was his custom when alone—a circumstance which caused Mrs. Temple to remark, as she and Lilly went down to the parlor—"Alas! dear Lilly, what a mistaken estimate does one portion of mankind form of another. This poor pedlar now envies us the happiness of rank and wealth which we do not feel, and I—yes, even I—what would I not give to be able to carol so light-hearted a song as that which he is singing! Who is this man, Lilly, do you know him?"

"Why, ma'am, if all they say is true, every one knows him, and nobody knows him. He's known as the *Cannie Soogah*, or jolly pedlar. They say, that although he prefers this kind of life, he's very wealthy. One person will tell you that he's a great rogue, and would cheat Satan himself, and others say he's generous and charitable. In other respects," continued Lilly, blushing, "he's not very well spoken of, but it may be false. I have always found him myself very civil; and them that spoke harshly of him were people that he kept at a distance."

The pedlar ceased his song as soon as they made their appearance in the parlor, into which Lilly admitted him for the sake of mutual convenience.

"Here's a shawl—a beautiful shawl, Mr. ——— what's this your name is?"

"The name that I have for set days and bonfire nights," he replied, "is one I seldom tell," and at the same time there was a dry air of surprise about him on hearing her ask the question; "but the name I am generally known by is the *Cannie Soogah*, which manes, ma'am," he added, addressing himself in a respectful manner to Mrs. Temple, "the jolly merchant or pedlar."

"Well, Cannie," said Lilly, pronouncing the word with more familiarity than could have been expected from their apparent unacquaintance with each other, "here's a beautiful shawl that my mistress made me a present of."

"No, Lilly," said her mistress, with severity—for she neither could nor would sanction the falsehood, however delicately and well intended—"no, do not mislead the man, nor state anything but the truth. The shawl is mine, my good man, and I wish to dispose of it."

The pedlar looked at it, and replied, in a tone of disappointment, "Yes, ma'am, but I'm afeard it's beyant my manes; I know the value of it right well, and it's seldom ever the likes of it was in my pack. What are you axin', ma'am? it's as good as new."

"I think it cost twelve or thirteen guineas, as well as I can remember," she replied; "but it is not what it cost, but what you are now disposed to give for it, that I am anxious to know."

"Well, ma'am, you know I must look upon it as—hem—as a second-ha—at all events," he proceeded, checking himself with more delicacy than could be expected from him—"you must admit that it isn't new."

"Certainly," said she, "it has been more than eight years in my possession, although, at the same time, I believe I have not worn it more than half a dozen times."

"Well, ma'am," replied the pedlar, "I know the value of the shawl something betther even than yourself. If you will take six guineas for it, we will deal; more I cannot afford, for I must at once tell you the truth, that I may carry it about these twelve months before I find any one that knows its value."

Mrs. Temple was by no means prepared, any more than her servant, for such a liberal offer; and without any further hesitation she accepted it, and desired Lilly to place the shawl in his hands, and in the meantime, with equal consideration and good feeling, he handed Lilly six guineas, adding, "Give that to your mistress, but in troth, ma'am," he proceeded, respectfully addressing her, "it is just robbing you I am, but I can only say, that if I dispose of it at its *proper* value you'll hear from me again. Troth, if I wasn't a great rogue, ma'am, I'd give you more for it; but bad cess to the one o' me ever could be honest, even if I wasped for it."

"I do not think you dishonest, my good man," replied Mrs. Temple; "on the contrary, I am not displeased with your plain blunt manner. Lilly give him some——"

She checked herself at once, and passed a significant but sorrowful glance at Lilly, as she went up to the drawing-room.

She had no sooner gone, than the pedlar, with a shrug of satisfaction, exclaimed, in a subdued but triumphant voice: "Oh! by the hokey I've done her, and for that you must suffer, Lilly darlin'. Come now, you jumpin' jewel you, that was born wid a honey-comb somewhere between that purty chin and beautiful nose of yours—throth I must have a taste, for who the dickens could refuse the *Cannie Soogah?*" and before Lilly, who, by the way, was nothing loath, could put herself in an attitude of defense, he had inflicted several smacks upon as pretty a pair of lips as ever were pressed.

"Upon my word, now, Mr. Magrath, you're very impudent," she replied, "I wonder you're not ashamed, you great strong man you, to be kissing girls in this manner, whether they will or not. Look at the state you have my hair in; you're very rude, Mr. Magrath, and I'm really angry with you; you've broken one of my side-combs, too; you're a great rude man, so you are."

"Broke your side-comb, did I? Well, then, you couldn't be in better hands, darlin', here's a pair I make you a present of, and maybe they won't set you all off to pieces; here, darlin', wear these for my sake."

"But *are* you making me a present of these beauties, Cannie?"

"Troth an' I am, Lilly darlin', and wish they were betther for your sake—what's that I said? a present! oh the sorrow bit, I must have my payment—aisy now, darlin', my own sweet Lilly; there now, we're clear."

"Upon my word, Mr. Magrath, I don't know what to say to you, but you're such a great strong fellow, that a poor weak girl like me is but a child in your arms; are these real tortoise-shell though?"

"You may swear it; do you think I'd offer you anything else? But now listen, my darlin' girl, take this shawl, it's worth five-and-twenty guineas at least, troth, poor thing! it wasn't *since* their marriage it was bought; take it, I say, and go up widout sayin' a word, and lay it just where it was before, and if she seems surprised on findin' it there, tell her you suppose I forgot it, or if she won't believe you, and that all fails you, say that the Cannie Soogah, although she knows nothing about him, is a man that's undher great obligations to her family, and that he only tuck that method of payin' back a debt to her that he honestly owed to them, for, afther all, isn't she one of them?"

Lilly shook her head, and her eyes filled with tears, at the manly and modest generosity of the pedlar.

"Little you know then, Mr. Magrath, the load you have taken off my dear mistress's heart, and the delight you have brought upon the whole family."

"Well, Lilly dear, sure if I did, amn't I well paid for it? thanks to your two sweet lips for that. Sure, bad cess to me, but it was on your account I did it."

A vile grin, or rather an awkward blank smile, forced by an affectation of gallantry, accompanied the lie which he uttered.

"Oh, yes, indeed," replied Lilly, "on my account, don't think to pass that upon me; however, I can forgive you a great many things in consequence of your behavior just now."

"And yet you abused me for it," he replied, laughing, "but sure I knew that a purty girl always likes to be kissed; bad cess to me, but the same behavior comes naturally to me."

"Go now," said Lilly, with a comic and peremptory manner; "go your rounds, I say; you know very well that I mane your behavior about the shawl, and not your great strong impudence."

The pedlar, after winking and nodding meanings into her words that she had never thought of, slung his pack over his shoulder as usual, and proceeded on his rounds.

We have always been of opinion that there is scarcely anything more mysterious than the speed with which popular report travels, apparently with very inadequate machinery, throughout a large district of country. Before the day was more than half advanced, fame had succeeded in circulating a report that Matthew Purcel and Dr. Turbot had been both shot dead in the garden of the rectory. This report spread rapidly, and it is with equal pain and shame we are obliged to confess that in general it was received with evident and undisguised satisfaction. John and Alick Purcel, on their way home, were accosted at a place called "Murderer's Corner," by two of the men who had attended at their father's office that morning, and informed that he and Dr. Turbot had been murdered in the course of the day, a piece of information which was conveyed by them with a sneer of cowardly triumph that was perfectly diabolical.

"God save ye, *gintlemen!*" said one of them, with a peculiar emphasis on the last word; "did ye here the news?"

"No, Jemmy, what is it?" asked John.

"Why, that Darby Hourigan is very ill," he replied, with mock gravity.

"No thanks for your information, Jemmy," replied the other; "if you told us something of more interest we *might* thank you."

"Never mind him, *gintlemen*," replied his companion, "there's nothing wrong wid Darby Hourigan, barrin' that he occasionally rubs himself where he's not itching, but there's worse news than that before you."

"What is it, then?" asked Alick; "if you know it, let us hear it, and don't stand humming and hawing as if you were afraid to speak."

"Faith, an' it's no wondher I would, sir, when it's to tell you that you'll find your father a murdhered corpse at home before you."

"Great God! what do you mean, sir?" asked John.

"Why, *gintlemen*, it seems that himself an' Parson Turbot wor both shot in the par-

sonage garden to-day. The parson's takin' his rest in his own house, but your father's body was brought home upon the car. The bullet entered your worthy father's breeches' pocket, cut through a sheaf of notes that he had to pay the parson his *tides* wid, and from that it went on——"

Human patience could not endure the ill-suppressed and heartless satisfaction with which the fellow was about to enter into the details, and, accordingly, ere he had time to proceed further, John Purcel, turning a hunting-whip, loaded for self-defense, left him sprawling on the earth.

"Now, you ill-conditioned scoundrel," he exclaimed, "whether he is murdered or not, take *that* for your information. Alick, lay on Hacket there, you are the nearest to him," he added, addressing his brother.

Hacket at once took to his heels, but the other, touching his horse with the spurs, cantered up to him, and brought the double thong of his whip into severe contact with his neck and shoulders. When this was over, the two fiery young men exclaimed:—

"There, now, are our thanks, not merely for your information, but for the good will with which it was given, and that to the very sons of the man whom, by your own account, you have murdered among you. If his blood, however, has been shed, there is not a drop of it for which we will not exact a tenfold retribution."

They then dashed home, at the highest speed of which their horses were capable, and throwing themselves out of the saddle, rushed to the hall-door, where they knocked eagerly.

"Is my father at home, Letty?"

"Yes, sir, he's in the parlor."

"In the parlor," exclaimed Alick, looking keenly into her face; "what is he doing in the parlor, eh?"

"Why, he's readin' a letther, sir."

"Reading a letter, is he?"

"Yes, sir."

"Thank God!" exclaimed both the young men, breathing freely; "that will do, Letty—here, Letty, is half-a-crown for you to buy a ribbon."

"And another from me, Letty, to buy anything you fancy."

The girl looked at them with surprise, and for a moment or two seemed at a loss how to account for such evident excitement. At length she exclaimed: "By dad, I have it; you won the hunt, gintlemen."

"Better than that, Letty," they replied, nodding, and immediately entering the parlor.

"Well, boys," said the father, "a good day's sport?"

"Capital, father! are you long home!"

"Since about two o'clock."

"How did you come?"

"Why, boys, ye must know that either Dr. Turbot or I was fired at to-day. A bullet—a pistol bullet—whistled right between us in the parsonage garden, and the poor frightened doctor refused to come by the usual way, and, in consequence, I was obliged to take the lower road."

He then entered into a more detailed account of the attempted assassination, and heard from them, in reply, a history of their intelligence and adventure at Murderer's Corner with Hacket and Bryan, for so the fellows were named.

"Well," said the proctor, "thank God, things are not so bad as they report, after all; but, in the meantime, the plot appears to be thickening—here's more comfort," he added, handing him the notice which Mogue told him he had found upon the steps of the hall-door, where, certainly, he had himself left it. John took the document and read as follows:—

"To Proctor Purcel and his Horsewhippin' Sons.

"This is to give you notice, that nothing can save yez. Look back upon your work an' see what yez desarve from the counthry. You began with a farm of sixty acres, and you took farm afther farm over the heads of the poor an' them that wor strugglin', until you now have six hundre' acres in your clutches. You made use of the strong purse against the wake man; an' if any one ventured to complain, he was sure to come in for a dose of the horsewhip from your tyrannical sons, or a dose of law from yourself. Now all that I've mentioned might be overlooked an' forgiven, for the sake of your wife and daughters, but it is for your conduct as a Tithe Proctor *that you and your sons must die.* Don't think to escape me, for it can't be done. There is not a day in the week, nor an hour in the day, but I have you at my command. Be prepared, then, for your fate is sealed; and no earthly power can save you. There is the sign [three coffins] and the blood that marks my name is from my own veins. *You and your sons must die.*

"Captain Terror,
"The Millstone-breaker."

"Tut," said Alick, "we have received far worse than this; it has been written by some hedge schoolmaster; as for my part, I despise it."

"Well, boys, at all events," proceeded the proctor, "be a little more sparing with the

horse-whip. The scoundrels deserve it to be sure; but at the same time it is not a thing that can be defended."

"Why, it's impossible to keep it from them, father," replied John; "their insolence is actually more than flesh and blood can bear. But had we not better make some inquiries into this precious production?"

"Where is the use of that?" said his father, to whom such communications had lost all their novelty and much of their interest; "however, you may do so; perhaps some accidental clue may be found that would lead us to discover the villain who wrote it."

Mogue was accordingly called in.

"How did this letter come into your hands, Mogue?" asked the proctor.

"It didn't *come* into them, sir," replied Mogue, with a smile which he intended to pass, for one of simplicity; "it was lyin' I got it, upon the hall-door steps."

"Did you see any strange person about the place, or near the hall-door to-day?" he asked.

"None, sir, sorra a creature—well now, wait—that I may never sup sorrow, but I did—there was a poor woman, sir, wid a whack of a son along wid her."

"Did you see her near the steps?"

"That I may be happy, sir, if I could take it upon me to say—not wishin' to tell a lie—but she might a' been there, the crathur."

"What kind of a looking woman was she?" asked John.

"A poor woman, sir, as I said."

"I do not mean that; of course, I know she was; but what dress had she on, and what kind of features or complexion had she? Was she big or little?"

"I'm just thinkin'," replied Mogue, seemingly attempting to recollect something, "was it to-day or yesterday I seen her."

"Well, but answer directly," said Alick, "what was she like?"

"The son of her was a bullet-headed *ownsha*," replied Mogue, "and herself—well now, that I may never die in sin, if I could say rightly. I was fetchin' some oats to Gimlet Eye, an' didn't take any particular notice. The *ownsha* had black sooty hair, cut short, an' walked as if his feet were sore—and indeed it strikes me that he had kibes—for these poor people isn't overly clane, an' don't wash their feet goin' to bed at night, barrin' at Christmas or Easther, the crathurs. But, sure the Lord look down on them, they have enough to do to live at all!"

"You couldn't say what direction she came from?"

"Well, then, no."

"Nor the direction she went by?"

"Well, no sir, I could not."

"But are you certain it was to-day, and not yesterday, you saw her?"

"Then that's what's puzzlin' me—eh! let me see—ay—it was to-day—an' I'll tell you how I know it. Bekaise it was to-day I brought the oats to Gimlet Eye—you know he was harrowing the black park yestherday, and was in care of Paudeen Sthuccaun. But sure, sir, maybe somebody else about the place seen them."

An investigation was consequently held upon this reasonable suggestion, but, we need scarcely assure our readers, without effect; the aforesaid "poor woman" having had existence only in the fertile imagination of stainless and uncorrupted saint Mogue.

The latter had scarcely retired, when a gentle knock came to the door, and Alick, on opening it himself, found their friend and neighbor, Darby Hourigan, standing outside.

"Well, Hourigan, what do you want now? have you repented, and come to the resolution of paying your tithes?"

Darby gave no direct answer, nor indeed any answer at all to these questions, but simply said, "There's a bit o' paper, sir, for Misther John."

"What is this? Oh, oh, a summons!—very well, Mr. Hourigan, my brother will attend to it."

"This is where John Purcel lives, sir?" proceeded the man, according to some form which he supposed necessary to give effect and reality to the service; "you acknowledge that, sir, do you?"

"Live here!—why, you scoundrel, don't you know he does? Where else did he ever live?"

"Ay, but you are only answerin' one question by another," replied Hourigan; "and I'll sarve *you* wid another to-morrow if you don't speak the truth."

"John," shouted his brother, "you're wanted. Here is your old friend Hourigan, anxious to get another—ha! ha! ha!—he is off like a shot!" he proceeded, addressing his brother, as the latter entered the hall; "but in the meantime," he added, handing him the summons, "this document is intended for you."

"Well," observed John, laughing, "unless our friend O'Driscol is somewhat changed, I need not much fear Mr. Hourigan."

"He is changed," observed the proctor; "the fellow is beginning to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. If you wish to secure his favor, however, you ought to try and put him on the trail of a Conspiracy, or anything that will give him a tolerable justification for writing to his Friend the Castle, as he calls it! He is a regular conspiracy hunter, and were it not that he is

now awfully afraid of these Whiteboys, and naturally cowardly and easily frightened, I think he would be the plague of government as well as of the country."

It would, indeed, be extremely difficult to find a family so resolute and full of natural courage, and consequently so incapable of intimidation, as that of our friend the proctor. And what was equally striking, the female portion of them were as free from the weakness and timidity of their sex, in this respect, as the males.

CHAPTER VII.

A Shoneen Magistrate Distributing Justice.

On the morning but one afterwards, John Purcel proceeded to the house of his friend and neighbor, Fitzy O'Driscol, as he was usually termed for brevity. O'Driscol was rather a small man—that is to say, he was short but thick, and of full habit. He was naturally well made, and had been considered well-looking, until his complexion became a good deal inflamed from the effects of social indulgence, to which he was rather strongly addicted. His natural manner would have been plausible if he had allowed it to *remain* natural; but so far from this, he affected an air of pomp and dignity, that savored very strongly of the mock heroic. On the other side, his clothes fitted him very well, and as he had a good leg and a neat small foot, he availed himself of every possible opportunity to show them. He was, like most men of weak minds, exceedingly fond of ornaments, on which account he had his fingers loaded with costly rings, and at least two or three folds of a large gold chain hung about his breast. His morning gown was quite a tasteful, and even an expensive article, and his slippers, heavily embroidered, harmonized admirably with the whole fashionable deshabille in which he often distributed justice. He carried a gold snuff-box of very massive size, which, when dining out, he always produced after dinner for the benefit of the company, although he never took snuff himself. This, in addition to a tolerably stiff and unreclaimable brogue, and a style of pronunciation wofully out of keeping with his elegant undress, constituted him the very beau ideal of what is usually known as a *shoneen* magistrate.

John, on arriving, found him reading a paper in the breakfast-parlor, and saw Hourigan waiting outside, who, by the way, gave him such a look as a cat might be supposed to bestow upon a mastiff from whom she dreaded an attack—a look which, in Hourigan's case, combined as much ferocious vengeance and sullen hang-dog cowardice as could well be brought together on the same features.

"Well, Jack," said the pompous distributor of justice, addressing young Purcel, "how do you do? Take a seat—by the way, is it true that your father and my excellent friend, Dr. Turbot, were shot at yesterday?"

"True enough," replied John; "the bullet whistled right between them, and so close that each felt the wind of it."

"The country is getting into a frightful state, friend Purcel, eh? Upon my honor now, yes! it is so—it is so."

"Why there is no question of it," replied John; "it is already in a frightful state."

"It is, Mr. Purcel, and in my opinion, the *crame* of the matter will be blood—blood—my dear John—that is what it will come to."

"Certainly you speak, Mr. O'Driscol, like a man that knows the country, and can feel the pulse of the public officially—I mean, of course, as a magistrate—for it is now, and in times of such turbulence, that men—I mean magistrates—of your stamp—will prove themselves serviceable to the government of the country, and to the country itself; intelligent and determined men—I mean magistrates—who know not what fear is, and who will do their duty at the risk of their lives."

"True, John, it is such men, or rather magistrates, who can render the most important services to government. The duties of a loyal and attached magistrate are not a mere raycrayation during these times. And yet, John," he added, sinking his voice into a confidential whisper, "I protest to my honor that the life of a man—I mane, as you say, a magistrate—who resolves firmly to perform his duty, is not extramely safe; why then should a man—I mane a magistrate—unnecessarily expose himself to the fate of *Going*,* when he might much more safely remain snug and quiet, without putting either himself or his neighbors to inconvanience by an over-strict discharge of his duty?"

"If everything be true that I have heard," said John, "the government would scarcely expect to hear such sentiments from the intelligent and determined Mr. O'Driscol."

"Ha! ha! ha!—well done, John,—I drew you out. Upon my honor, I am glad to find that you are loyal, at all events, and that is a rare virtue among most persons of your creed;—excuse me, but, except in name, I can scarcely consider you as belonging to it."

* The name of a magistrate and clergyman, I think, who was assassinated.

"Why, sir," replied John, "I trust I am a firm, but not a bigoted Catholic."

"*Roman Catholic*, John, always say, if you plaise; *we* claim to be the *true* Catholics you know; and for that raison it is better always to avoid confusion."

"As to that, we shall not quarrel about it, I trust," replied Purcel; "but with respect to another point, there is only one opinion, Mr. O'Driscol, and that is, that you are a most resolute and determined man."

"Magistrate you mane, I think, John; so magistrate, if you plaise—ha! ha! ha! By the way will you touch the bell? Thank you."

"I beg your pardon," proceeded Purcel, having touched the bell, "I *should* have said magistrate: because it very often happens that whilst the man is a coward, the magistrate is as brave as the Duke of Wellington."

"Upon my honor and conscience, there may be some truth in that," said O'Driscol, nodding, but at the same time not exactly appropriating the category to himself; "but how do you make that appear, John?"

"Why," replied Purcel, who, between ourselves, was a bit of a wag in his way, "it proceeds from the spirit of his office. Take a magistrate, for instance, *as a man*—a mere man; place him in the ordinary situations of society; let him ride home at night, for instance, through a disturbed district like this, which, if he is wise, he will avoid doing, or let him be seen in an isolated position even in daylight without protection, and you will find him a coward of the first shaking. On the contrary, place him, *as a magistrate*, at the head of a body of police or military, and where will you witness such courage? That, then, is the individual, I say, who being naturally a coward as a man, goes through his duty with courage as a magistrate; I say this is the individual whom the government should reward with especial favor."

"By the way, will you touch that bell again?—oh, here he comes. Sam," he said, addressing a servant, "get me up a bottle of soda-wather. Will you have a glass of soda, John? I dipped a little too deep last night."

"No, sir, thank you," replied Purcel, "I was moderate last night; and at all events soda is rather cold for such a day as this is."

"Well, then can't you stiffen it with a little brandy?"

"No, thank you, I won't touch anything at present. I almost wish, as I was saying," he proceeded, "that there was the slightest touch of cowardice in you, naturally; because if it could be proved in connection with your official intrepidity, you would deserve everything that a government could bestow upon you."

"Faith and honor, that is certainly putting the argument in an extremely new point of view, and I agree with you, John; that is—that—let me see—the more cowardly the man the braver the magistrate. Well, I don't know that aither."

"No, no!" replied John, "I don't mean that."

"Well, what *do* you mane? for I thought I undherstood you a while ago, although I find that I don't now."

"I mean," proceeded the other, "that when a man who is naturally cowardly—I don't mean, of course, a poltroon, but timid—proves himself to be firm, resolute, and intrepid in the discharge of his duties as a magistrate, such a man deserves a civic crown."

"A what?"

"A civic crown. Of course you know what that is."

"Of coorse I do, John; and upon my honor and conscience there is great truth in what you say. I could name you a magistrate who, I believe, as a magistrate, could not very aisily be bate, and yet who, without being a downright coward, is for all that no hairo to his valley de sham, as they say."

"My father was talking about you last night, sir, and I think before long he will be able to put you on the scent of as pretty a conspiracy as was ever detected. He had some notion of opening a communication with government himself upon the subject; but I suggested—that is, I took the liberty, sir, if you will excuse me, but if I erred I assure you Mr. O'Driscol, my intentions were good—I say I took the liberty, sir, of suggesting that it would be better to place the matter in your hands, as a person possessing more influence with your friend, the Castle, and more conversant with the management of a matter that is too important to be in any but official hands. I have time at the present only to allude to it, for I see Mr. Darby Hourigan there waiting to prosecute, or as he says to take the law of, your humble servant."

"Hang the scoundrel, what a hurry he is in! How did you quarrel with him?"

"Faith, sir, in the first place, he was insolent and offensive beyond all patience."

"Yes, my dear John," observed O'Driscol, with a good deal of solemn pomp, especially as the magistrate was beginning to supersede the man, "all that is very provoking, but at the same time you know the horsewhip is an illaygal instrument."

"I beg your pardon, sir," replied Purcel, with a smile, "I believe not."

"I mane, John," said the other, "an improper use of it is. You should be more cautious, John, in using it, for the punishment of any animal barring a horse. I have heard, by the way, many complaints against you on that head."

"Yes, sir, but you are not aware that it is from a principle of humanity I horsewhip the scoundrels."

"How is that now, John? for upon my honor and conscience I can't for the life of me persave any great humanity in it."

"Why, sir," replied Purcel, who, as the reader must be aware, was humbugging the worthy magistrate all the time, "I appeal to yourself whether it is not better for any one of these rascals to get a horsewhipping from me than a citation to the Bishop's Court from my father."

"Ay, but do they never happen to get *both*, John?" returned the magistrate. "But what has a horsewhipping and a citaytion to the Bishop's Court to do with aich other?"

"Simply this," replied the other, "that when my father hears I horsewhip any of them, he takes no further proceedings against them; and whenever I wish, consequently, to keep a fellow out of that troublesome situation, I horsewhip him from pure kindness."

"So that you look upon that as a good turn to them?"

"Precisely, sir. As I said, I horsewhip them from motives of humanity."

"Faith and don't be surprised, John, if they should happen to put a bullet through you from motives of humanity some of these days. However, do you think it is of importance?"

"Is what, sir?"

"The conspiracy. I beg your pardon—come into the office till I see what I can do for you at all events."

He accordingly preceded Purcel to his office, accompanied by Sam Finigan, a kind of thorough male domestic who acted as his clerk. Here he took his seat with a good deal of ceremony, hemmed several times, and desired Hourigan to be admitted. Just at that moment, and while Hourigan was coming in, a young lad, or tiger, a son of Finigan's, by the way, who had been in the habit of carrying letters to and from the neighboring post-office, now entered and presented him with one, to the following effect:—

"To O'Driskal, the Shoneen Magistridge.

"Sur this is to let you no that if you go an givin wan la for the poor and anudher for the rich you will soon get a bullet through you as Tandrem af Tavnibeg got. If you wish to bay safe thin bay the poor man's friend—oderways it'll be worse for you.

"Kaptn Justige."

O'Driscol having read this communication, became desperately disturbed for about a couple of minutes, after which, as if struck by some sudden thought, he appeared to recover himself considerably, but by no means fully, as was evident from the agitation of his voice and the involuntary tremor of his hands.

"I hope, sir," said Purcel, who could not help observing the commotion into which the notice had put him, "that you have received no ill tidings. You seem agitated and alarmed, or rather distressed, if one can judge; I hope there's nothing wrong."

"Why, no," replied the magistaate, "not exactly wrong; but it is certainly an infamous country to live in. I am an impartial man, Mr. Purcel—I mane, sir, an impartial magistrate; but the fact is, sir, that every man is marked whose life is valuable to the government of his country. I know no man, Mr. Purcel—mark me you, too, Hourigan—I know no man, sir, in my capacity of a magistrate—hem—hem!—only according to the merits—I am as much the poor man's friend as I am the rich man's, and of the two more: if I lane at all, which I don't, it is to the poor man; but as an impartial man—magistrate I mane—I know naither rich or poor. On the bench, I say, I know naither poverty nor riches, barring, as I said, upon the merits."

"Beggin' your pardon, your worship—an' before you begin—as I was comin' down here a while agone," said Hourigan, "I seen a strange and suspicious-lookin' man inside the hedge at the skrubbery below; he was an ill-faced villain, plaise your reverence, an' I thought I seen his pockets stickin' out as if he had pistols in them. I thought it better to tell your worship."

The worthy magistrate had scarcely recovered from the first fit of agitation when this intelligence threw him into an immediate relapse. Indeed so ludicrous was his distress that he actually wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

"Sam," said he, after a fit of tremulous coughing, into which he forced himself, in order to conceal the quaver which terror had given to his voice, "Sa—am—hugh! ugh! —go-o—an-n-d—ugh! ugh! ugh!—get a ca-a-se of doub-uble pis-pistols—ugh! ugh! —da—amn this cough—ough—and place—them-em on the table here—we—we—will at least pep-pepper the villain—if—if—he—he

should dare to show his face—ace. I trust I—I—know my duties as—a mag-istrate—my cour—urage and in-trep—id—ity as such—ugh! ugh! ugh!—are no saycret now, I think."

"I don't believe," observed Purcel, "that there is one syllable of truth in what he says. I can read the falsehood in his eye. However," he added, "if you will postpone this matter of Hourigan's for a few minutes, I shall soon see whether there is any one there or not."

"Hère, then," said the magistrate, "take these pistols" (pointing to those which Finigan had just laid on the table). Purcel declined them with a nod, taking a good case at the same time out of his own pocket. "No, sir, thank you, I never travel without my two friends here, with either of which I can break a bottle at the distance of thirty yards. You will be good enough to tell that to your friends, Mr. Hourigan, and also to reflect upon it yourself."

Having examined his friends, as he called them, he started out and proceeded directly towards the shrubbery, where, however, there was no trace whatever of any one. On his way home he met Fergus O'Driscol, who had been out that morning cock-shooting through the grounds, and to whom he mentioned the story told by Hourigan. "Why, the lying scoundrel," exclaimed Fergus, "I saw him myself speaking to a new laboring lad whom Mr. Arthur, the steward, sent in there this morning to gather and remove the rotten underwood. He has only vamped up this story to frighten my heroic father, and between you and me it is not difficult to do."

"I dare say you are right, Fergus, but between you and me again, who is this new comer you mention? for you may rest assured that if he be very intimate with Darby Hourigan, you had as good keep an eye upon him. Darby is one of the good ones."

"I don't even know his name yet," replied Fergus, "but if we are to judge by appearances, he is somewhat of Darby's kidney, for a worse-looking young vagabond I have seldom laid my eyes upon. At all events I know Hourigan's story to be a lie, for as he came up the avenue I was in the shrubbery, looking for a cock I shot, which dropped among the hollies, and there was certainly nobody there but this strange fellow and Hourigan, both of whom chatted to each other for some minutes across the hedge; and, by the way, I now remember that they kept watching about them suspiciously, as if they did not wish to be seen speaking together. The fact, now that you have mentioned the case, is evident; I could not be deceived in this matter."

"Well then," said Purcel, "I will tell you how we shall bring that circumstance to a test: get the strange fellow to walk my horse up and down the avenue, so as that he must necessarily come in Hourigan's way, and if they refuse to speak in my presence—you may accompany me down the avenue if you wish—we may take it for granted that there is an understanding between them; and on this account we will say nothing on our return, but that we failed to see or trace any one, which will be the truth, you know."

Whilst this conversation took place between the two young men, our worthy magistrate, now that he had an opportunity of recruiting his courage, withdrew for a moment, accompanied by his servant and clerk, Sam Finigan. "Sam," said he, in undisguised trepidation, "my life's not worth a week's purchase."

"That was a threatening letter you received, sir?" said Sam, inquiringly.

"The same, Sam. Upon my honor and conscience, they have threatened me with the fate of Tandrem of Tavnibeg, who got five bullets into him, not fifty yards from his own door. Get me the brandy then quick, and another bottle of soda-wather. Good Lord! Sam, see what it is to be an active and determined magistrate."

"Well," said Sam, after he had placed the brandy and soda-water before him, "it's one comfort, plaise your honor, that if they shoot your worship, government will take a glorious revenge upon them. The three kingdoms will hear of it."

"Ay, but, Sam—good Lord!—here's God grant us a long life in the manetime! but upon my honor and conscience it's not revenge upon my own murdherers I want, but to be made a Stipendiary. Revenge! Good Lord! what is revenge to a murdhered man, Sam, maybe with five bullets in him! Now, Sam, this is not want of courage in me—but—but—mere distress of mind on looking at the state of the country. A suspicious-looking villain to be lurking in my own shrubbery, with the very pistols sticking out of his pocket! Good Lord! I believe I'll take another half-glass, Sam; I think I feel somewhat more intrepid—more relieved. Yes, pour me out another half-glass, or a whole one, as your hand is in, Sam, and take another for yourself."

"Thank your worship," said Sam, who never called him anything else when exercising, or about to exercise his functions as a magistrate, "here's the same, your worship—God grant us both—your worship at any rate—a long life!"

"And a happy death, Sam; there is no harm to add *that* to it."

"And a happy death, your worship!"

"Well, Sam, here's the same! And now I think in a few minutes my natural courage will return; for indeed I'm too kind-hearted, Sam, and too aisily made feel, as you persave, for the traisonable state of the country, and of the misguided people. However, I only feel these things as a man, Sam, as a kind-hearted man, but not as a fearless and resolute magistrate, Sam: as a magistrate I don't know what fear is."

"That's well known, your worship; when you're at the head of a body of polis or military, every one knows what you are; isn't dare-devil Driscol, your worship, the best name they have for you?"

"True enough, Sam; d——n them; a man, especially a magistrate, couldn't be courageous unknown to them—they'll be sure to find it out. I'm a good deal relieved, Sam, and—hem—hem—let us proceed to investigate this important matter of Hourigan's. These Purcels are—hem—ahem—too much in the habit of violating the law, Sam, and that's not right—it's illaygal—it's illaygal, Sam, to violate the law; I say so, and I think I can't allow such breaches of the"—here, however, the thought of the conspiracy occurred, and swayed him in a moment against Hourigan. "To be sure Hourigan's a scoundrel, and deserves a horsewhipping every day he rises."

"True enough, sir; and sure if the Purcels break the law, it is only upon the people, and arn't the people, your worship, as ready to break the law as the Purcels! Sorra warrant, then, I'd grant against Misther John this bout."

"And what would you do, Sam?"

"I'd bind Hourigan over to keep the pace."

"I believe you're right, Sam; he's a bad bird, Hourigan; so I think the best thing to do is to tie his hands up for him."

"And if we could tie his tongue up too, your worship, it ought to be done."

Here, on the other hand, the notice he had just received stuck in his throat, and reduced him to a new perplexity.

"But then, Sam," he added, "think of the revengeful spirit that is abroad. Good Lord! it is awful! Haven't I this moment a threatening notice on my table? Well," he added, "if ever a man suffered in the cause of government as a public man and an active resolute magistrate, I do; indeed, Sam, if I had known the cares, and troubles, and responsibilities of my official situation, I am not certain whether I would not have preferred a private station; but you see government will find out men of talent and public spirit. If I had less of either, it isn't threatening letters I'd be resaving this day. Come, then, let us go to the discharge of our duty, Sam, fearlessly and impartially, as a man entrusted with great public authority."

He accordingly proceeded to the office, a good deal recruited in courage by the brandy, but by no means altogether relieved from the apprehensions consequent upon the receipt of the notice and Hourigan's narrative.

Fergus and Purcel, on their way from the shrubbery to the house, fell upon a simpler plan by which to detect Hourigan's falsehood, and ascertain whether there existed any personal acquaintance or understanding of any sort between him and the new-comer.

"Well, John," said O'Driscol, after once more placing himself with his usual pomp in his magisterial chair, "have you been able to find any account or trace of the assassin?"

"None whatever, sir," replied Purcel; "neither tale nor tidings of him could I find."

"When did you see him, Hourigan?" asked Fergus; "was it on your way here?"

"Yes, sir."

"In the avenue?"

"In the avenue, sir, about fifty yards inside the hedge, jist opposite the hollies."

"Why did you not speak to him?"

"Troth, sir, he had too suspicious a look; for how did I know but it's a bullet I'd get into me, if I was only seen obsarvin' or watchin' him?"

"Then you did *not* speak to him?" asked Fergus.

"Faith, you may swear that, sir; that is not the time to pick up strange acquaintances."

The two young friends were now satisfied of Hourigan's falsehood, and perhaps of his treachery; and a very slight but significant glance to that effect passed between them.

"Well, well," said the magistrate, "we—I mane myself, at any rate—are well able to protect ourselves. I shall not in future travel unarmed, and he that—hem—ahem—he that will mistake me for a timid man will find out his error maybe when it's too late. Come, Hourigan, what charge is this you have against Mr. Purcel?"

"Plaise your honor, he abused, and assaulted, and bate me until I didn't know for a time whether I was alive or dead."

"How was that, Hourigan, sir?"

"Bekaise, your honor, I had not my *tides* for him."

"Now that I look at you, you certainly have the marks of violence about you. Well, but did you give no provocation, sir? It's not likely Mr. Purcel would raise his hand to you if he had not resaved strong provocation at yours."

"Sorra word, then, your honor, ever I said

to him, barrin' to tell him that I hoped he'd have compassion on me and my little family, and not drive us to ruin for what I wasn't able to pay. He then asked me, was that the answer I had for him, and not his money, and he does no more but ups wid his whip and laves me as you see me."

"Why, now, you d——d scoundrel!" exclaimed John, "how can you——"

"Pardon me, Mr. Purcel," said the magistrate, interrupting him with what he intended to be dignity, "you forget what is due to the court, sir. There must be no swearing nor abuse here. The court must be respected, Mr. Purcel."

These words brought a sneer of secret triumph upon Hourigan's features, that was unquestionably very provoking.

"I beg to apologize to the court," replied Purcel, "if for a moment I have forgotten what is due to it; but, in fact, your worship, there is not one word of truth in what he says. His language was insolent and provoking beyond the limits of human patience. He told me that both my father and myself were dishonest—that we were oppressors of the poor, and blood-suckers; called us hard-hearted and beggarly upstarts, and that we would sell our Church and our country for filthy lucre and upstart pride. Instead, your worship, of promising to pay his tithes, he said we might go to hell for them, and make the devil our paymaster, what he'll be yet. And further, he said he'd never pay a farthing of them, and set law, lawyers, police, military, and magistrates all at open defiance. Now I beg to know, your worship, what loyal and peaceably-disposed man, that wishes to see the laws of his country, and those respectable magistrates that administer them, respected—what man, I say, fond of peace and quietness, could bear such language as that? It is not what he said of either myself or my family that I complain of, but of the abuse he heaped upon the law at large, and the independent magistrates of the country. I certainly, in the heat of the moment, so far resented the affront offered to the most respectable magistracy of this fine country as to give him a few slight touches of the whip, more like one in jest, I assure your worship, than like an angry man."

"Hourigan," said O'Driscol, swelling up to a state of the most pompous indignation, "this is infamous conduct which he relates of you, sir. How dare you, sir, or any impudent fellow like you, take the undaicent and unjustifiable liberty of abusing the independent and loyal magistracy of Ireland? It is by fellows like you, sir, that traison and sedition are hatched. Your conduct was gross and monstrous, and if Mr. Purcel had come to me and made affidavit of the language stated, I would have consithered it my duty to commit you. Such language, sirra, was seditious!"

"Yes," replied Hourigan, "and you would be right; but there is not one word of truth in what Mr. Purcel says, your worship; for instead of that, plaise your reverence, when I threatened to come to you to get the law against him—'I'll go to Squire Driscol,' says I, 'and that's the gintleman that will give me justice at any rate.' 'You and Squire Driscol may go be hanged,' says he; 'I don't regard him a traneen; he thinks, since he has been made into a justice of pace, that the ground's not worthy to carry him,' says he. Can you deny that, Mr. John?"

Purcel's limbs began to move, and his very flesh to creep with indignation at the impudent but artful falsehoods of Hourigan, who was likely to succeed in touching the magistrate's weak points with such effect as to gain him over to his side.

The worthy official shook his head with a kind of very high-minded pride, as much as to say, I am far above the level of such observations.

"Mr. Purcel," said he—"he—hem—hem—I am sorry to hear that you could give way to such extramely indiscreet and disrespectful language as this."

"Swear him, sir," said Purcel, "and let him be put to his oath, for I protest to heaven, Mr. O'Driscol, and as I am, I trust, an honest man, I never once mentioned your name, nor was there the slightest allusion made to it—none, sir, whatever."

"The truth is, I should think it very strange, Mr. Purcel, and very odd, and very unfriendly and disenganious in you to spake of any magistrate in such a style as that. However, Sam, take the book and swear Hourigan."

Sam accordingly took the book, and putting it into Hourigan's hand, said, "You shall make true answers to such questions as shall be put to you, and swear the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God, and one-and-sixpence to me!"

"Never mind the one-and-sixpence at present, Sam," said his master, "he owes you nothing now. Proceed."

Hourigan's thumb had the genuine angle on the back of the book, but it did not escape Sam, who said, "You intend to kiss your thumb, Hourigan, but it's no go; here, sir, stand there, so that the book won't be a screen for you; turn round—there now—proceed."

Hourigan, finding that the evasion in this instance was impracticable, gave it a strong,

derisive smack that might be heard outside the room. "I hope," he added, "you are satisfied now, Mr. Finigan."

"I see," replied Sam, "that you've kissed the book when you were made to do it; but I see jist as clearly that the sorra much truth are we goin' to get out of you."

The case then proceeded; but as it would prove, probably, rather tiresome to the generality of our readers, we shall not give it at length. It was quite evident, however, that the plaintiff and defendant both were well acquainted with the vacillating and timid character of the magistrate, who in the case before us was uniformly swayed by the words of the last speaker; and it was equally evident that each speaker so shaped his arguments as that they might the more effectually bear upon O'Driscol's weak points.

"Hem—hem—this, I persave, turns out to be a very important and difficult case, Mr. Purcel—a very difficult case, Hourigan—a—a—a case indeed that requires great deliberation and coolness. Here is strong provocation on one hand, and prompt punishment on the other. Can you swear, Mr. Purcel, to the accuracy and substance of the language you say Hourigan uttered?"

"Certainly, sir, without hesitation."

"Because if he does, Hourigan, I shall be obliged, according to Act of Parliament, sir——"

Hourigan interrupted him by a groan, and a rather significant shrug.

"What do you shrug and groan for, sir?" asked the man of law, who felt both acts incompatible with the respect due to the court.

"Mavrone!" exclaimed Hourigan, "Acts of Parliament! oh! thin many a bitther piece of cruelty and injustice has been practised upon us by Act o' Parliament!"

"Ho, you traisonable villain!" exclaimed the other—"what sedition is this?"

"It is sich Acts o' Parliament," said the adroit knave, "that gets good men and good magistrates shot like dogs, an' that has brought the counthry to the fearful pass it's in. I wisht myself I was out of it, for the people is beginnin' to single out sich magistrates as they'll shoot, as if their lives worn't worth a rat's."

"Ah!—hem—hem—Hourigan, you are a d—d ras—hem—simple-hearted fellow, I think or you wouldn't spake as you do."

"But am I to get no justice, sir, against the man that left me as you see me? Is the poor man, sir, to be horsewhipped and cut up at the will an' pleasure of the rich, an' not to get either law or justice?"

O'Driscol's face was now a picture of most ludicrous embarrassment and distress.

"Certainly, Hourigan, I shall—hem—I shall always administer justice impartially—impartially—no one can question that. Your case," he added—(for we must say here that Hourigan's language brought back to his mind all the horrors of Tandrem's death, as well as that threatened to himself in the recent notice)—"your case, Hourigan is a difficult and peculiar one, poor man!"

"Hourigan, my good fellow," said Purcel, "take care of what you are about. Don't be too certain that some of your neighbors won't find you, before you are much older, in the centre of a deep-laid conspiracy; and perhaps the government of the country may have an opportunity before long to thank and reward those who will have it exposed and broken up. Do you understand me?"

Purcel, while he spoke, kept his eyes fixed very significantly upon the magistrate, to whose imagination a long and interesting correspondence with his friend, the Castle, started immediately forth, appended to which were votes of thanks, flattering testimonies, together with a stipendiary magistracy, with a full retiring pension, and an appointment for his son, in the background.

"He has made use of that language to intimidate your worship," proceeded Purcel, "but I think he ought to know you better."

"Sir," said O'Driscol, addressing Hourigan, "what did you mane by talking about shooting magistrates? Do you think, sirrah, to frighten me—Fitzgerald O'Driscol—from discharging my duty?"

"Frighten, you, sir! oh! bedad, your honor, you aren't the gintleman for that."

"No, sir, I believe not—I believe not, Hourigan; no, my poor man, I am not indeed. Hourigan, you are not an uncivil person, but why refuse to pay your tithes? You are well able to do it."

"Why, bekaise I daren't, sir; if I did—talkin' about shootin'—it's a round lump of lead I would find in my stomach instead o' my poor breakfast, some o' these days."

"I don't doubt but he is right enough there, your worship," observed Purcel, "there's a conspiracy——"

"Yes," exclaimed the magistrate, "oh! ay!—yes!—hem—a conspiracy! Well—no matter—let it rest for a little. Well—as this case is one of great difficulty, involving several profound points of law, I would recommend you to make it up, and be friends. Hourigan, you will forgive Mr. Purcel, who is hasty but generous. You will forgive him, I say, and he will give you something in the shape of a salve for your wounds. Come, forgive him, Hourigan, and I will overlook, on my part, the seditious language you used

against the Irish magistracy; and, besides, you will make me your friend."

"Forgive him, sir!" said Hourigan, shrugging himself, and putting up his hand to feel the welts of black and blue which intersected each other upon his countenance and shoulders. "An' maybe it's half-a-crown he'll threwn me."

"No, no, Hourigan, I'll guarantee for him that he'll treat you liberally: one good turn deserves another, you know."

"Well, then, let him say what he'll give me."

"There's a pound-note for you," said Purcel, flinging it across the table. "If you take that, you may, but if not, I'll give no more. Your worship, this, you perceive, is a cross-case, and if you receive examinations on the one side, you will, of course, upon the other?"

"True," replied O'Driscol, who had not thought of this, and who seized upon it as a perfect relief to him; "true, Mr. Purcel, it is a cross-case, and so I understand it. Let me recommend you to take the money, Hourigan."

"Well, then, your honor, I will, on your account, and bekaise, as your worship says, *bekaise one good turn desarves another*, an' ought to get it. I'm satisfied for the present." And as he spoke, he turned, in a skulking, furtive manner, such a look upon Purcel as we will not attempt to describe.

"Now, Hourigan," said O'Driscol, "I am glad I have settled this matter in your favor. If I had taken Mr. Purcel's informations, you would have certainly been transported; but the truth is, and I trust you have seen it this day, and will allow it, that in my magisterial capacity, although just and impartial I hope, yet, still, whenever I can with raison, I am always disposed to lane towards the poor man, and be the poor man's magistrate—hem—ahem!"

"Yes, plaise your honor," said Hourigan, rather drily, "but it's so hard to make the people at large believe the truth, sir. Good-mornin', your worship, an' many thanks for the illigant justice you gave me. Good-mornin' you, too, Misther Purcel; I hope we'll be betther friends, sir."

"And I hope you will pay your tithes, and keep a civiler tongue in your head," replied the latter, as Hourigan left the office.

Before this weighty matter was determined, Fergus O'Driscol, although satisfied that Hourigan and their new laborer were acquainted, resolved to corroborate his evidence of the fact, if possible, and for this purpose he sent the fellow, as had been agreed on, to walk Purcel's horse up and down the lower part of the avenue, near the entrance gate, which was somewhat secluded and not within view of the house, for the avenue was a winding one. In the meantime he stationed himself in a clump of trees, to which he went by a back walk in the shrubbery that was concealed from that part of the avenue. Here, we say, he stationed himself to watch these worthies, but, unfortunately, at too great a distance to hear their conversation, should they speak and recognize each other. On this subject he was not permitted to remain long in suspense. Hourigan soon made his appearance, and, on approaching the stranger, looked cautiously about him in every direction, whilst the latter, who had been walking Purcel's horse towards the house, suddenly turned back, and kept conversing with Hourigan until they reached the entrance gate, where they stood for about ten minutes in close and evidently confidential dialogue, as was clear from their watching in all directions, to make certain that they were not observed. They then shook hands, cordially, and Hourigan bent his steps towards the town of Lisnagola. Fergus, who had seen all their motions most distinctly, took occasion to pass up the avenue a few minutes afterwards, where he met the stranger still leading Purcel's horse.

"What's your name, my good fellow?" he asked.

"Phil Hart, sir."

"Do you know if the man who summoned Mr. Purcel before my father has gone out?"

"I don't know, plaise your honor."

"Did any person go out within the last few minutes?"

"Yes, sir, there went a man out; maybe it was him."

"You don't know Hourigan's appearance, then?"

"No, sir. Hourigan, was that his name?"

"Yes. Are you a native of this county?"

"Not exactly, sir; but I have friends in it."

"Who are they?"

"The Ahernes, sir, up in the mountains behind Lisnagola beyant."

"And who recommended you to Mr. Arthur?"

"His brother-in-law, sir, one Frank Finnerty, in the mountains above; that is, they're both marrid upon the two shisthers, plaise your honor."

"And what caused you to leave your native place?"

"Why, sir, my father houlds a bit o' land; he owed some tithe, sir, and——"

"Would not pay it; they consequently took proceedings—you resisted the execution of the law, and then you had to run for it."

"Well, not exactly, sir."

"How was it, then?"

"Why, sir, we paid the tithes; an' whin this was discovered, I, at any rate, had to run for it. The people, your honor, found out that it was I that ped them, an' I was glad, of coorse, to fly for my life. I'd thank you, sir, to keep what I tould you to yourself, for even if it was known in this neighborhood that I ped them, I wouldn't be safe."

"You don't know Hourigan, then?"

"How could I, sir, and me a sthranger?"

"Faith, and whether you do or not, it seems to me there's a strong family likeness between you and him."

"Maybe so," the fellow replied, with a grin. "I hear my father say that he sartinly was down in this counthry when he was sowin' his wild oats:" and with this observation he passed on with the horse he was leading.

CHAPTER VIII.

An Unreformed Church—The Value of Public Opinion—Be not Familiar with the Great.

Recent circumstances have, unfortunately, shown us the danger of tampering with, and stimulating, the blind impulses of ignorant prejudice and popular passion beyond that limit where the powers of restraint cease to operate with effect. At the period which our narrative has now reached, and for a considerable time before it, those low rumblings which stunned and frightened the ear of civilized society, like the ominous sounds that precede an earthquake, were now followed by those tremblings and undulations which accompany the shock itself. But before we describe that social condition to which we refer, it is necessary that we should previously raise the vail a little, which time has drawn between us and the condition of the Established Church, not merely at that crisis, but for a long period before it. This we shall do as briefly as possible, because we feel that it is an exceedingly unpleasant task to contemplate a picture which presents to us points of observation that are, from their very nature, painful to look upon—and features so secular and carnal, that scarcely any language could exaggerate, much less distort them,

The Established Church in Ireland, then, in its unpurged and unreformed state, was very little else than a mere political engine for supporting and fostering British interests and English principles in this country; and no one here had any great chance of preferment in it who did not signalize himself some way in favor of British policy. The Establishment was indeed the only bond that bound the political interests of the two nations together. But if any person will now venture to form an opinion of the Irish Church from her gorgeousness and immense wealth at that period, he will unquestionably find that what ought to have been a spiritual, pure, holy, self-denying, and zealous Church, was neither more nor less than an overgrown, proud, idle, and indolent Establishment, bloated by ease and indulgence, and corrupted almost to the very core by secular and political prostitution. The state of the Establishment was indeed equally anomalous and disgraceful. So jealous was England, and at the same time so rapacious of its wealth, that it was parcelled out to Englishmen without either shame or scruple, whilst Irish piety and learning, when they *did* happen to be found, were uniformly overlooked and disregarded. All the ecclesiastical offices of dignity and emolument were bestowed upon Englishmen; upon men who lived here with reluctance, and but seldom—who had no sympathy with the country or its inhabitants—nay, who looked upon us, in general, with feeling of hostility and contempt; and who, by example or precept, rendered no earthly equivalent for the enormous sums that were drawn from a poor and struggling people. It is idle to say that these prodigious ecclesiastical revenues were not paid by the people, but by the landlord, who, if the people had not paid them, would have added them to the rent. But even so—the struggling peasant reasoned naturally, for he felt it to be one thing to pay even a high rent to the landlord, whose rights, as such, he acknowledged, but a very different thing to pay forth out of his own pocket a tenth of his produce to the pastor of a hostile creed, which had little sympathy with him, for which he received no spiritual equivalent, and on which, besides, he was taught to look as a gross and ungodly heresy.

But this was not the worst of it. In the discussion of this subject, it is rather hazardous for the champion of our former Establishment to make any allusion to the landlord at all; the fact unfortunately being, that in the management and disposal of land, the landlords, in general, were gifted with a very convenient forgetfulness that such a demand as tithe was to come upon the tenant at all. The land in general was let as if it had been tithe-free, whilst, at the same time, and in precisely the same grasping spirit, it so happened, that wherever it was tithe-free the rents exacted were also enormous, and

such as—supposing tithe had not an existence—no country ever could suffer to become the basis of valuation, or to settle down into a system. In fact, such was the spirit, and so profligate the condition of the Established Church for a long lapse of time, both before and after the Union, that we may lay it down as a general principle, that everything was rewarded in it but piety and learning.

If there were anything wanting to prove the truth and accuracy of our statements, it would be found in the bitter and relentless spirit with which the Established Church and her pastors were assailed, at the period of which we write. And let it be observed here, that even then, the Church in this country, in spirit, in learning, in zeal, and piety, was an angel of purity compared to what she had been twenty or thirty years before. The course of clerical education had been defined, established, and extended; young profligates could not enter the Church, as in the good old times, without any earthly preparation, either in learning or morals. They were obliged to read, and thoroughly to understand, an extensive and enlightened course of divinity—to attend lectures and entitle themselves, both by attendance and answering, to a certain number of certificates, without which they had no chance for orders. In point of fact, they were forced to become serious; and the consequences soon began to appear in the general character of the Church. Much piety, activity, learning, and earnest labor were to be found in it; and indeed, we may venture to say, that, with the exception of her carnal and debasing wealth, she had been purified and reformed to a very considerable extent, even then. Still, however, the bloated mass of mammon hung about her, prostrating her energies, secularizing her spirit, and, we must add, oppressing the people, out of whose pockets it was forced to come. When the calamity, therefore, which the reader may perceive is partly upon and impending over, the Protestant clergy, actually occurred, it did not find them unprepared, nor without the sympathy of many of the very people who were forced by the tyrannical influence of party feeling to oppose them publicly. To their sufferings and unexampled patience, however, we shall be obliged to refer, at a subsequent period of our narrative; and for that reason, we dismiss it for the present.

Such, then, was the state of the Protestant Established Church for a considerable length of time *before* the tithe agitation, and also *immediately preceding* it; and we deemed it necessary to make the reader acquainted with both, in order that he may the better understand the nature and spirit of the almost universal assault which was, by at least one party—the Roman Catholic—so furiously made upon it. At the present period of our narrative, then, the population of the country, especially of the South and West, had arrived at that state of agitation, which, whether its object be legitimate or not, is certain, in a short time, to brutalize the public mind and debauch the public morals, by removing all the conscientious impediments which religion places against crime, and consequently all scruple in commiting it. Heretofore, those vile societies of a secret nature, that disgrace the country and debase the character of her people, existed frequently under separate denominations, and for distinct objects. Now, however, they all consented to abandon these peculiar purposes, and to coalesce into one great conspiracy against the destruction of the Establishment. We do not mean to assert, however, that this general outcry against the Church, and its accompanying onslaught on her property, originated directly with the people. No such thing; the people, as they always are, and, we fear, ever will be, were mere instruments in the hands of a host of lay and clerical agitators; and no argument was left unattempted or unurged to hound them on to the destruction of the Establishment. From the Corn Exchange down to the meanest and most obscure tribunal of agitation throughout the kingdom, the virtues of passive resistance were inculcated and preached, and the great champion of popular rights told the people publicly and repeatedly that they might not be afraid to follow his advice, for that it mattered little how oppressive or stringent any act of parliament in defence of the Established Church might be, he would undertake to drive a coach and six through the very severest of its penalties. Nor were the Catholic priesthood idle during these times of storm and commotion. At the head of them, and foremost in both ability and hatred of tithes, stood the late Dr. Doyle, the celebrated J. K. L. of that day, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin; a man to whose great intellectual powers the country at large chiefly owes the settlement of that most difficult and important question. This able prelate assailed the system with a fiery vehemence that absolutely set the country in a blaze, and reduced the wealthy Establishment to a case of the most unprecedented distress. Who can forget that memorable apothegm to the Irish people on the subject? "Let your hatred of tithes," he said, "be as lasting as your sense of justice."

Unfortunately it is an easy task to instruct

or tempt the Irish peasant to violate the law, especially when sanctioned, in that violation, by those whose opinion and advice he takes as the standard of his conduct. Be this as it may, the state of the country was now becoming frightful and portentous; and although there had not, as yet, been much blood shed, still there was no person acquainted with the extraordinary pains which were taken to excite the people against the payment of tithe, who was not able to anticipate the terrible outburst and sanguinary slaughters which soon followed.

We have already detailed a midnight meeting of the anti-tithe confederacy; but so confident had the people soon become in the principle of general unanimity against the payment of this impost, that they did not hesitate to traverse the country in open day by thousands; thus setting not only law, but all the powers of the country by which it is usually carried out and supported, at complete defiance.

Threatening letters, and notices of violent death, signed with blood, and containing the form of a coffin, were sent to all such as were in any way obnoxious, or, what was the same thing, who were in any way disposed either to pay tithes or exact them.

In this state matters were, when, one morning about a week after the scene we have just described in O'Driscol's office, a dialogue to the following effect took place in the proctor's immense farm-yard, between our friend Mogue Moylan and his quondam sweetheart, Letty Lenehan. Letty, of late, that is since the morning of the peddler's conversation with Mogue, had observed that some unaccountable change had taken place in his whole manner, not only towards herself, but in his intercourse with the rest of his fellow-servants. He was, for instance, much more silent that he had ever been: but although he spoke less, he appeared to think more; yet it might be observed, that whatever the subject of his thoughts was, it evidently had diffused a singular degree of serenity, and a peculiarly striking complacency through his whole manner. With respect to herself he had ascended from the lover into the patron; and although she had been amusing herself at his expense throughout their previous courtship, if it could be termed such, yet she felt no less puzzled as to the cause of such a change, and quite as anxious to ascertain it.

On the morning in question, Mogue and Jerry Joyce had been engaged in winnowing a large quantity of wheat in the barn. Jerry, whose manner was ostensibly that of a soft, simple young fellow, and whom but few looked upon as possessed of the ordinary run of common sense, was treated by Mogue, and indeed by most, but not all of his fellow servants, as one would treat a young lad who had not yet arrived at years of discretion, or maturity of judgment.

"Jerry," said Mogue, "why but you do be cortin' the girls, man alive? That I may never sin but it's a great thing to have them fond o' one."

"Ay," replied Jerry, who was perfectly well aware of his foible, "if I had the art of sootherin' and puttin' my comedher an thim like some o' my acquaintances; hut, me! is it foolish Jerry Joyce they'd care about? Oh, no! begor that cock wouldn't fight."

"Your acquaintances!" exclaimed Mogue, seizing upon the term, in Jerry's reply, which he knew referred to himself, "and which of your acquaintances, now, does be sootherin' an' puttin' his comedher an' them, eh, Jerry?"

"Oh! dear me, Mogue," replied the other, "how droll you are! As if you thought I didn't mane one Mogue Moylan that they're tearin' their caps about every day in the week."

"Tearin' their caps! arrah, who is, Jerry?"

"Why, the girls."

"The girls! Och! man, sure that's an ould story; but I declare it to you, Jerry, it isn't my fault; it's a nateral gift wid me, for I take no pains to make them fond o' me; that I may never do harm if I do."

"An' how does it happen that they are? Sure there's Letty, now—poor Letty Lenehan—an' God help her! sure, for the last week, she appears to me to be breakin' her heart. She doesn't say af coorse, that you're the occasion of it; but doesn't every one of us know that you are? Have you been could to her, or what?

"Why thin, now, Jerry, I declare it to you that I'm heart sorry for poor Letty; but what can I do? I amn't my own man, now, do you hear that?"

"Sure you don't mane to say that you're married?"

"Not exactly married; but listen hither, Jerry—you don't know the man you're spakin' to—it's a gift that God gave me—but, you don't know the man you're spakin' to; however as for poor Letty, I'll provide for her some way—the poor affectionate crature; an' she's good-lookin,' too; however, as I said, I'll do something for her some way," and here he nodded and winked with most villainous significance.

If Jerry had not fully comprehended the scoundrel's character, it is very probable that this language would have caused him to give the hypocritical villain a sound drubbing; for it must be known to our

readers, that Jerry and Letty were faithfully attached to each other — a circumstance which was also known to the whole family, and which nothing could have prevented Mogue from observing but his own blind and egregious vanity.

"But what do you mane, Mogue, when you say you aren't your own man!"

"I can't tell you; but the thruth is, Jerry—poor, good-natured Jerry—that every man ought to look high, especially when he sees the regard that's for him, and especially, too, when God—blessed be His name—has gifted him as some people is gifted. There's a man hereabouts that thinks he could put my nose out o' joint. Oh! it's a great thing, Jerry, to have nice, ginteel, thin features, that won't spoil by the weather. Throth, red cheeks or a white skin in a man isn't becomin'; an' as for larnin', Jerry, it may require a long time to take it in, but a very little hole would soon let it all out. May I never do harm but I'm glad that job's over," alluding to the employment at which they were engaged. "Oh! then, but that's a fine cast o' whate!"

"It is," replied Jerry; "but in regard to the larnin' I don't undherstand you."

"No matther for that, Jerry, I may be a good friend to you yet; ay, indeed may I—poor good-natured Jerry; an' when that time comes, if you have any scruple in axin' Misther Moylan to countenance you and befriend you, why it'll be your own fault my poor, good-natured Jerry."

"Many thanks, Misther Moylan," replied Jerry, assuming a gravity which he could scarcely maintain, "remember that you don't forget your promise. I'm goin' over to get the sacks from Misther John; an' by the way, aren't you goin' out to-day to shoot wid Misther M'Carthy?"

"Well, I declare, I believe I am; I know the mountains well, an' I'm fond of seein' fun, or of hearin' of it, any way."

Jerry then departed, and Mogue, now left to himself, exclaimed in a soliloquy, "Ay, an' if I don't see it this night, I'll hear of it to-morrow, I hope. Mr. M'Carthy, you're in my way; but as I said to that poor omadhawn, although it took many a year to get the larnin' into that head of yours, one little hole will soon let it out again." As Mogue uttered the last words, the ear of Letty Lenehan was somewhat nearer him than he imagined. She had come to call them to breakfast, and seeing that the back-door of the barn was open, she approached it, as being nearest to her, and on peeping in, half disposed for a piece of frolic, she heard Mogue utter the soliloquy we have just repeated; but as he stood with his back towards her, he was not at all aware that she was present, or had heard him.

Immediately after breakfast, Mogue and M'Carthy set out for the mountains, the latter furnished with all the necessary equipments for the sport, and the former carrying a game-bag and refreshments; for as M'Carthy knew that it must be the last day he could devote to such amusements, he resolved to have a good day's sport, if possible.

"Now, Mogue," said his companion, "you are much better acquainted with these mountains than I am, and with those places where we may be likely to find most game. I, therefore, place myself in your hands for the day."

"Well, indeed I ought, sir, to know them," replied Mogue, "and I believe I do; and talkin' of that, you have often heard of the great robber and rapparee, Shaun Bernha?"

"I have heard of him, and of his Stables, which lie up somewhere in these mountains."

"Exactly, sir; an' it is what I was thinkin', that we might take a look at them in the coorse of our sport to-day; in regard, especially, that there's more game about them than in any other part of the mountains."

"Very well, then, Mogue," replied his companion, "so be it; you are, as I said, my guide for the day."

"But do you know, sir, why he was called Shaun Bernha?"

"No, I can't say I do."

"It was odd enough, to be sure. Howandever, may I be happy but they say it's true! You see, sir, he was called Shaun Bernha bekaise he never had a tooth in his head; an' no more had any of his family; and yet, sir, it's said, that he could bite a piece out of a plate of sheet iron as aisily as you or I could out a cake of gingerbread."

"Well, Mogue, all that I can say to that is, that he had devilish hard gums, and stood in no fear of the toothache."

"Well, then, we'll sweep around the slebeen hills here, keepin' Altnaveenan to our right, and Lough Mocall to our left; then, by going right ahead we'll come to his stables; and indeed they're well worth seein'."

"With all my heart, Mogue, never say it again." And they accordingly proceeded at a vigorous pace to the mountains, which were now distant not more than a mile and a half from them.

In the meantime we shall leave them to pursue their game, and beg our readers to accompany us once more to the house of our friend, Fitzy O'Driscol, who, what between the dread of assassination on the one hand, and the delight of having a proper subject to justify him in communicating with the government on the other, passed his time in alterations, now of fear, and again of his pe-

culiar ambition to be recognized as an active and fearless magistrate by the then existing powers, that were, to such as knew the man and understood his character, perfectly ludicrous. On the morning in question, he was, as usual, seated, in his morning-gown and slippers, at the breakfast-table, reading a country paper, in which, by the way, appeared the following paragraph :—

"Turbulent State of the Country.—We regret to say, that the state of the country is every day becoming more and more unsettled. A few days ago, whilst one of our excellent and most resolute magistrates, Fitzgerald O'Driscol, Esq., was engaged in his office, determining an important case of assault that came before him, and which he did, as he usually does, to the perfect satisfaction of the parties, he received a threatening notice, couched in most violent language, in fact, breathing of blood and assassination! Why a gentleman of such high magisterial character as Mr. O'Driscol should have been selected as an object of popular vengeance, we do not understand. Mr. O'Driscol combines in himself all those qualities that are peculiarly suited to the discharge of his duties in such distracted times as the present. Whilst firm and intrepid, almost to a miracle, he is at the same time easy of access, impartial, and kind to his humble countrymen, to whom he has uniformly proved himself mild and indulgent, so far as justice—which by the way, he always tempers with mercy—will allow him; and in consequence of this, he is uniformly known, and deserves to be known, as the poor man's magistrate. It is true, he is known also to be a man of highly loyal and constitutional principles; a warm friend to order, peace, and a resolute supporter of the laws of the land—qualities which are looked upon as crimes by the resolute and disloyal among our kind-hearted but misguided people. Of one thing, however, he would beg to apprise the mistaken individuals who have ventured to threaten him, and that is, to take care how they attempt to put their foolish threats into execution against so daring and desperate a man as Mr. O'Driscol is when provoked. He goes well armed, is a dead shot, and would feel deeply grieved at having the blood of any of his mistaken countrymen on his hands. This we say from what we know of Mr. O'Driscol, both as a man and as a magistrate. In further connection with the state of the country, we cannot think but that government, if made properly acquainted with it, would place some mild, firm, but fearless and resolute stipendiary magistrate in our neighborhood; we mean, of course, a man who is capable, by the peculiar qualities of his character, to make himself an instrument of great public good, both to the people and the government. Such a man we know; but as we are writing without either his knowledge or consent, we do not feel ourselves called upon to pursue this important subject further. All we can say is, that the violent opposition which is now organized against tithes, and which is already beginning to convulse the country, will, and even now does require, the active courage and decided abilities of such a man."

"Well, now, Catherine," said he, addressing his daughter, who sat near him, "upon my honor and conscience that was a friendly paragraph of my friend Swiggerly—extremely so, indeed. The fact is, a dinner and a good jorum is never thrown away upon honest Swiggerly; for which raison I'll ask him to dine here on Thursday next."

He then handed her the paper, pointing out the paragraph in question, which she read with something of an arch smile, and which, on her brother Fergus (who had been to Lisnagola) joining them, she handed to him.

"Fergus," said she, looking at him with an expression of character still more comic, but yet sufficiently subdued to prevent O'Driscol from observing it, "is not that paragraph very complimentary to papa?"

Fergus, who at once reciprocated the comic glance alluded to, replied rather significantly, "It is certainly very *gratifying* to him, Catherine."

"And very creditable to Swiggerly," added O'Driscol.

"Yes, father," replied Fergus, "but I think he ought to preserve, if possible, a little more originality. The substance of that paragraph has been regularly in his paper, in one shape or other, three or four times a year during the last couple of years. I ought to except the introduction of the threatening notice, which certainly is a new feature, and the only new one in it."

"Fergus," said the father, whilst his round, red, convivial features became more inflamed, "you are super-critical this morning."

"Not at all, sir; but you will excuse me for saying, that I think a man who is seeking to ingratiate himself with the government, what is more, to receive substantial favors from it, ought not, from principles of self-respect, to suffer these stereotyped paragraphs to appear from time to time. Government is not so blind, sir, but they will at once see through the object of such paragraphs."

"Staryrayotyped! What the devil, sir, do you mane by staryrayotype? Do you mane

to make a staryrayotype of me? That's dutiful, Mr. Fergus—filial duty, clane and clear—and no doubt about it. But I tell you, sir, that in spite of your staryrayotypes, it is such articles as the able one of my friend Swiggerly that constitutes the force of public opinion. Government! Why, sir, the government is undher more obligations to me than I am to them. It was my activity and loyalty that was the manes, principally, of returnin' the son of the gustus ratalorum of the county for the borough of Addleborough. He was their own candidate; and if that wasn't layin' them undher an obligation to me, I don't know what was. You may say what you like, but I repate, it's a right good thing to have the force of public opinion in your favor."

"Yes, of public opinion, I grant you; but surely you cannot pretend, father, that such gross and barefaced flattery as that can be termed public opinion?"

"And why not, sir? Upon my honor and conscience, things is come to a pretty pass when a man—a magistrate—like me, must be lectured by his own son! Isn't it too bad, Catherine?"

"I am no politician, you know, but I think he doesn't mean to lecture you, papa; perhaps you ought to say to reason or remonstrate with——"

"Raison! remonstrate! And what right has he aither to raison or remonstrate with a man—or rather a magistrate—such as I am known by the government to be. He calls that paragraph gross and barefaced flattery, and myself a staryrayotype! but I tell him now that it is no flattery, nor anything at all but the downright naked thruth, and no man ought to know that better than I do, for this good raison, that it was myself wrote every line of it, and got Swiggerly only to correct it."

A deep and crimson blush overspread his daughter's face on hearing this mean and degrading admission; and Fergus, who was in the act of bringing a bit of ham to his mouth, suddenly laid it down again, then looked first at Catherine, then at his father, several times in succession. The good-humored girl, however, whose merry heart and light spirits always disposed her to look at the pleasant side of everything, suddenly glancing at the red, indignant face with which her father, in the heat of argument, and in order to illustrate the truth of public opinion in this instance, had made the acknowledgment—all at once, and before the rosy blush had departed from her beautiful face, burst out into a ringing and merry laugh, which Fergus felt to be contagious and irresistible. On glancing again at his father, he joined her in the mirth, and both laughed long and heartily.

"And so, father," proceeded Fergus, "you bring us a paragraph written by yourself, to illustrate the value of public opinion; but believe me, my dear father, and I mean it with all respect, these puffs, whether written by one's self or others—these political puffs, I say, like literary ones, always do more harm than good to the object they are intended to serve."

"Never you mind that, Fergus, my boy, I know how to play my game, I think; and besides, don't you know, I expect a snug morsel from government for yourself, my boy; yet you never consider that—not you."

"But, my dear father, I never wish to hear a respectable man like you acknowledge that he is *playing a game* at all; it reminds me of the cringing, sycophantic, and prostitute crew of political gamblers and manœuvrers, by whom, not only this government, but every other, is perpetually assailed and infested, and amongst which crew it would grieve me to think that you should be included. As to myself, if I ever get anything from government, it must not come to me through any of those arrangements by which trick and management, not to say dishonesty and corruption, are, to the shame of all parties, so frequently rewarded. With a slight change upon Pope, I say—

"'Grant me honest *place*, or grant me none.'"

"Pope! What the devil do I care about his opinions? let him preach and stick to his controversy with Father Tom—from whom he hadn't so much to brag of—but as for you, Fergus, you are, to spake plainly, a thorough ass. What d——d stuff you have been letting out of you! Go and find, if you can, some purer world for yourself to live in, for, let me tell you, you are not fit for this. There is no perfection here, Catherine, is there?"

"Oh, yes, papa! certainly."

"There is—is there? Well, upon my honor and conscience, now, this is the first time I've heard that argument used. Come, then, how do you prove it—eh?"

"There is perfection, papa, occasionally at least, to be found among women, and—you certainly, sir, cannot deny the truth of this—occasionally, too, among magistrates—ha! ha! ha!"

"Ah! Kate, I know you of old! Very good that—extremely good, upon my word! However, as I was saying, if you don't act and think as the world about you acts and thinks, you had as good, as I said, get a bether one if you can. Here, now, I see Mat

Purcel coming up the avenue; and as I want to have some private conversation with him, I must be off to my office, where I desire you to send him to me. There's a time for everything, they say, and a place for everything. I hope, Fergy, you and I will have occasion, before long, to say, a place for some—ha! ha! ha! Well, as I said, there's a place for everything! and I don't think it would become me to spake upon official business anywhere but in my own office. We must not only do our business properly, but look like it."

Purcel found our pompous little man enveloped, as we have already said, in a most fashionable morning-gown and embroidered slippers, and at the same time busily engaged in writing.

"How do you do, Mr. Purcel?" said he; "will you excuse me for about three minutes, till I finish this paragraph, after which I am at your service?"

"Certainly," said Purcel, "I'm in no hurry, Fitzy, my boy."

"Here," continued the other, "amuse yourself with that paper. By the way, there's a flattering notice there of your humble servant, by our friend Swiggerly, who certainly is a man of sound judgment and ability."

"I won't interrupt you now," replied the proctor; "but I will tell you my opinion of him by and by."

The magistrate then proceeded to finish his paragraph, as he said, by his important manner of doing which, Purcel, who thoroughly understood him, was much amused. He frequently paused for instance, placed his chin in the end of his half-closed hand, somewhat like an egg in an egg-cup, looked in a meditative mood into Purcel's face, without appearing to see him at all; then went over to the library, which ought rather to have been pronounced his son's than his; and after having consulted a book—a Latin Horace, which by the way he opened at the art of poetry, of which volume it is, we presume, unnecessary to say, he did not understand a syllable, he returned to his desk seemingly satisfied, and wrote on until he had concluded the passage he was composing. He read it once in silence, then nodded his head complacently, as if satisfied with what he had written, after which he rubbed his hands and closing the desk exclaimed, "D——n all governments, Mr. Purcel, and I wish to heaven there never had been a magistrate in Ireland."

"Why, what kind of doctrine is this, Fitzy," exclaimed his friend, "especially from such a loyal man and active magistrate as you are."

"D——n loyalty too, Mr. Purcel, it's breakin' my heart and will break it—I think I'll emigrate to America before they kill me here."

"Why, to tell you the truth, my dear Fitzy, I was a good deal alarmed when I heard of that ugly notice you got; but it's not every man would have borne the thing with such courage as you did."

"Thank you, Mister Purcel, I feel that as a compliment coming from you; and by the way, I haven't forgotten to mention you with praise in my correspondence with the Castle. However—ha! ha! ha! you rather misunderstood me—I mane to say that the life is worn out of me, by our present government—Good God! my friend, surely they ought to know that there's plenty of magistrates in the country besides myself, that could give them the information they want upon the state of the country, and the steps they ought to take to tranquillize it, as well as I could; I can't, however, get them to think so, and the consequence is that that d——n Castle can't rub its elbow without consulting me."

"Well," replied Purcel, "you are to blame yourself for it; if you were not so loyal, and zealous, and courageous too, as you are, they would let you alone and leave you to peace and quietness, as they do other people."

"Upon my honor and conscience, it's little pace or quietness they leave me, then; but I agree with you, that the whole cause of it is my well-known loyal principle and surprising activity in keeping down disturbance and sedition. Widow Cleary's affair was an unlucky one for me, and indeed, Mat, it was the activity and resolution that I displayed in making herself and her spawn of ragged brats prisoners at the head of the Possy Come-at-us, aided by the military, that first brought me into notice with the Castle."

The proctor, who feared now that he had mounted his hobby, and that he would inflict on him, as he was in the habit of doing after dinner, a long-winded series of his magisterial exploits, reminded him that he had expressed a wish to see him on very important business.

"I wouldn't care," he added, "but the truth is, Fitzy, I am pressed for want of time, as I should have been at the bishop's court, where I have cited several of these tithe rebels long before this. What is the business, then?"

"It is a matter, my dear Mr. Purcel——"

"Why the devil do you Mr. Purcel me?" asked the proctor, warmly. "It was formerly Mat and Fitzy between us, and I don't see why it should not be so still."

"Hem—ahem—why it was, I grant, but then—not that I am at all a proud man, Mr.

Purcel—far from it, I trust—but you see—hem—the truth is, that to a man as I am, a magistrate—trusted and consulted by government, and having, besides, to meet certain low prejudices against me in the country, here, I don't think—I'm spaking of the magistrate now, Purcel—not of the man—observe that, but the truth is—d—m the word, for I don't think there's in the whole catalogue of names, so vulgar a one as Fitzy—and be d—d to it."

The proctor laughed till the tears came from his eyes, at the dignified distress with which the great little man resented this degrading grievance.

"Ha! ha! ha! and so," said he, "I'm not to call you Fitzy; well, well, so be it—but I have been so long in the habit of using it in our conversation, that I shall find it a difficult matter to change the practice. But upon my conscience, Fitzy—I beg pardon, Mr. O'Driscol, I must say—I think it great weakness in your worship, to let such a trifle as that annoy you."

"It may be a weakness," said the other, "but before we go further, I make it a personal request, that you won't use Fitzy to me, and above all things, in the presence of strangers. I entrate and implore that you won't."

"Very well, then—a bargain be it—but I must insist that you never call me Mat, or anything but Mr. Purcel, again."

"Why, but you know you are not a magistrate, Mat."

"Never mind, Fitzy—hem—never mind, your worship, call me whatever you like—unless a rogue—ha! ha! ha! well, but to business—what is this you want with me?"

"A business that, if well managed, may be a beneficial one to you and me both."

"Out with it, though—you know I'm in a hurry."

"Why now," proceeded the little man, relapsing unconsciously into a sense of his violated dignity,—"curse me, if I'd for fifty—no, not for a hundred, that the Castle should come to know that I was addressed as Fitzy."

The proctor's mirth was again renewed, but after a moment or two, the serious part of the conversation was resumed by the magistrate.

"Your son John, the other morning," he proceeded, in a low and confidential tone, "hinted to me that you had partly discovered—hem—ahem—a very important circumstance—in short, that you had partly, if not altogether, discovered a—a conspiracy."

The proctor stared at him with unaffected surprise, which, by the way, did not escape the magistrate's notice. "A conspiracy!" he added, "and did John tell you this?"

"Why, not exactly," replied O'Driscol, fearing that the young man, as we have already hinted, had been indiscreet, and consequently wished to keep him as much out of blame as possible; "not exactly, my dear Mat—hem—my dear Mr. Purcel, but you know that I am rather sharp—a penetrating fellow in my way, or I would not be of the commission to-day—he seemed merely to drop the expression accidentally only."

"I pledge my honor to you," replied the proctor, who at once saw through the hoax that his son had played off upon him, "that the young rascal had no authority from me for mentioning a single syllable about it."

"Well, but, I trust, my dear Ma—Mr. Purcel, that you are not angry with him, especially for having mentioned it to me at any rate."

"Why, my dear friend," said the other, "if the time were come, you are the first man to whom I would disclose the circumstance, but the fact simply is, that it is not ripe yet."

"Even so; you will have no objection, I trust, "to let me know something of the nature of it—even now."

"It is impossible!" replied the proctor, "quite out of my power; if I breathe a syllable about it, the whole matter must be blown before the proper time, and then——"

"Well, and what then?—proceed."

"Why, neither you nor I would be one moment safe; and in that case, it is much more prudent that you should not know it—God forbid that I, above all men, should be the person to involve you in risk and danger. Your own ardor and excessive loyalty expose you to dangers enough, and too many."

"You promise, however, when the proper time comes, to make me acquainted with it?"

"Certainly, when the proper time comes; and if the thing ripen at all, you shall hear of it."

"But listen," asked O'Driscol, licking his lips as a man would when thinking of a good dinner; "is the matter you allude to a real, actual, bona-fide conspiracy?"

"An actual live conspiracy," replied the proctor; "and as soon as it has reached maturity, and is full grown, you shall have all the honors of the discovery."

"That will do, Mat—hem, that will do, my dear friend. I shall have the Castle dancing with delight—and whisper—but this is honorable between ourselves—any advantages that may result from this affair, you shall partake of. The Castle and I understand one another, and depend upon it, your name shall be mentioned with all the honor and importance due to it."

"This, then, was what you wanted with me?"

"MY LIFE FOR YOURS. I'LL TAKE CARE THAT YOU WON'T WANT YOUR DINNER NOR YOUR SUPPER AITHER, I'LL GO BAIL.—*Tithe Proctor*, p. 421.

"It was, and upon my honor and conscience, you and yours, and I and mine, will have cause to rejoice in it. Government, my dear Mat—ahem—is a generous benefactor, and aided by it we shall work wonders. We shall, I trust, all be provided for—your sons and my own fool—M'Carthy, too, we shall not forget."

"All that will be very pleasant, I acknowledge," replied the proctor, dryly, "and in the meantime good-by, and may God spare both you and me long life and happiness—until then, and as long after it as we may wish for."

Our friend M'Carthy, who was little aware of the liberal provision which the benevolence of his friend had in contemplation for him, was in the meantime likely to be provided for in a very different manner, and upon principles very much at variance with those of that political gentleman yclept the Castle, an impersonation which it would be exceedingly difficult to define.

CHAPTER IX.

Sport in the Mountains.

In the course of that day Letty Lenehan, who had been musing over Mogue's soliloquy in the barn, felt that kind of impression which every one has felt more or less under similar circumstances. The fellow's words left a suspicion upon her mind that there was evil designed against young M'Carthy by this smooth-going and pious hypocrite. How to act she felt somewhat at a loss, but as the day advanced, the singular impression we have mentioned deepened, until she could conceal its existence no longer. After dinner, however, she seized upon an opportunity of consulting her friend and lover, Jerry Joyce, who, by the way, had also been somewhat surprised at an expression which escaped Mogue in the morning. On comparing notes, both came to the same conclusion, viz.,—that there existed in the bosom of Mogue some latent hard feeling against M'Carthy.

"I am sure there does," said Jerry, "and I think I know why too—Mogue isn't the only person that has a deadly hatred against Mr. M'Carthy; and indeed, Letty, I have raisons to fear that the poor young gintleman, for so he is by family and blood at all events—is in great danger. However, if it will make your mind aisy, I'll see what can be done to get him safe over it this night."

"This night, Jerry? why what do you mane? what about this night more than any other night?"

"Hut! you foolish girl," replied Jerry, "sure you ought to know that it's only a way of spakin' we have, when we say this night or this day."

"Ay," replied Letty, with great shrewdness and in a spirit of keen observation, "if you had spoken that way, you'd have said this day, and not this night, bekaise it's not night yet."

Jerry smiled, and resolving to put an end to the conversation, exclaimed, "Troth and I'll have a kiss from your lips, this day, and, if you vex me much more, another this night too;" and as he spoke, with a face of good-humor and affection, he contrived to suit the action to the word, after which Letty sprang beyond his reach, but pausing a moment ere she disappeared. "Jerry, listen," she proceeded, "don't let Mr. M'Carthy come to harm either by night or day, if you can—still an' all remember that your own life is a dearer one—to—to—yourself, at any rate, than anybody else's is."

Jerry nodded, and was about once more to lessen the distance between himself and her, when she immediately took to flight and disappeared, which was precisely what he wanted.

"God protect the young man!" he exclaimed, after she had gone, "for if that sleeveen villain is bent on doin' him harm, or, as I ought to say, of bringin' him among them, and especially to him that hates him like hell, this is the very night for it, and he has him on the spot too; well, we'll see whether they'll be back in time or not, for as Mr. M'Carthy is to dine here, Mogue at any rate must and ought to be home a little before dusk. I'll make preparation, however, and what can be done for him, I will do."

In the meantime we shall follow our two sportsmen into the mountains for a time, in order to render justice to poor innocent Mogue, who little dreamt that a human being had suspected him.

M'Carthy, on entering the mountain, at first expressed a doubt to his companion that the circuit or sweep road by Shaun Bernha's stables was rather extensive, and would occupy too much time, besides bringing them farther out of their way than it was his (M'Carthy's) intention to go.

"You know, Mogue," he observed, "I am to dine with Mr. Purcel to-day, and, if we go so far, I shall never be home in time for dinner."

"Never mind, sir," replied his companion, "you don't know all the short cuts of Sleebeens as well as I do. My life for yours, I'll take care that you won't want your dinner

nor your supper aither, sir, I'll go bail. Jist trust yourself to me, and if I don't bring you to where the grouse, snipes, and hares is in thousands, never put faith in me again."

M'Carthy, who had every confidence in Mogue, and, also, more than usual respect for him, in consequence of his apparent love of truth and religion, accompanied him without the slightest hesitation; feeling satisfied that his intimate acquaintance with the whole wild locality around them, was a proof that he would be able to keep his word.

The scenery of those mountains, though wild, as we have said, is, nevertheless, remarkable for that poetic spirit of beauty which our learned and accomplished countryman, Dr. Petrie, infused, with such delightful effect, into his landscapes. Even the long stretches of level moor, which lie between the hill ranges, present in summer that air of warm repose which the mind recognizes as constituting a strong element of beauty; but it is at evening, when the crimson sun pours a flood of golden light upon their sides and tops, turning the rich flowery heath with which they are covered into hues of deep purple, that the eye delights to rest upon them. Nor is the wild charm of solitude to be forgotten in alluding to the character of these soft and gracefully undulating mountains. Indeed we scarcely knew anything more replete with those dream-like impressions of picturesque romance which, in a spirit so perfectly solitary, sleep, still and solemn, far from the on-goings of busy life, in the distant recesses of these barren solitudes. Many a time when young have we made our summer journey across the brown hills, which lay between us and the mountains we are describing, for the express purpose of dreaming away whole hours in their contemplation, and steeping our early imagination in the wild and novel beauty which our heart told us the spirit of solitude had impressed upon them.

How far our sportsmen proceeded, or in what precise direction, we are not in a capacity to inform our readers. That they proceeded much further, however, than M'Carthy had wished or contemplated, will soon become sufficiently evident. What kind of sport they had, or whether successful or otherwise, it is not our present purpose to say. Be the game abundant or scarce, we leave them to pursue it, and request the reader to accompany us in a direction somewhat removed, but not very far different from theirs.

It may be necessary, however, to state here previously, that these mountains are remarkably—indeed proverbially—subject to deep and impervious mists, which wrap them in a darkness far more impenetrable to the eye than the darkest nights, and immeasurably more confounding to the reason, by at once depriving the individual whom they chance to overtake, of all sense of his relative position. At night the moon and stars may be seen, or even a fire or other light at a distance; but here, whilst enveloped in one of those dark and dismal fogs, no earthly object is seen within two yards of you, and every step made is replete with doubt or danger, and frequently with death itself, in the shape of deep shoreless lakes and abrupt precipices.

The night had now set in for about two hours, and one of the deep fogs which we have just described began to break into broad gray fragments, which were driven by the wind into the deeper hollows, dissipated almost at once into the thin and invisible air. Sometimes a rush of wind would sweep along like a gigantic arrow, running through the mist, and leaving a rapid track behind it like a pathway. Sometimes again a whirl-blast would sweep round a hill, or rush up from a narrow gorge, carrying round, in wild and fantastic gyrations, large masses of the apparently solid mist, giving thus to the scene such an appearance as would lead the spectator to suppose that some invisible being or beings, of stupendous power, were engaged in these fearful solitudes.

The night, we have said, had set in, and the mist was clearing, or had altogether cleared away. Up far in these mountains lived a herd, or caretaker and gamekeeper, all in one, named Frank Finnerty. He was a man of bad character—gloomy, sullen, and possessed of very little natural feeling. The situation in which he resided was so remote and solitary, so far from the comforts and conveniences that are derived from human intercourse, that scarcely any other man in the parish could be induced to undertake the duties attached to it, or consent to live in it at all. Finnerty, however, was a dark, unsocial man, who knew that he was not liked in the country, and who, on his part, paid back to society its hatred of him with interest. He had been engaged in many outrages against the law, and had been once sentenced to transportation for manslaughter—a sentence which would have been carried into effect were it not for a point made in his case by the lawyer who defended him. His wife was a kind-hearted, benevolent woman naturally, but she had been for years so completely subdued and dispirited, that she was, at the period we write of, a poor, passive, imbecile creature, indifferent to everything, and with no more will of her own than was necessary to fulfil the duties of mere mechanical existence.

It was now near ten o'clock; Finnerty and she had been sitting at the fire in silence for some time, when at length she spoke.

"Well, I hope there was no one out on the mountains in that mist."

"Why," said he, "what is it to you or me whether there was or not?"

"That's thrue," she replied, "but one wouldn't like any harm to come to a fellow-creature."

"Dear me," he exclaimed, in harsh tones of hatred and irony, "how fond you are of your fellow-cratures to-night! little your fellow-cratures care about you."

"Well, indeed, I suppose that's thrue enough, Frank; what 'ud make them care about me or the likes o' me, and for all that whether they may think o' me now, I remimber the time when they did care about me, and when I was loved and respected by all that knew me."

There was a touching humility, and a feeble but heart-broken effort at self-respect in the poor woman's words and manner that were pitiful and pathetic to the last degree, and which even Finnerty himself was obliged to acknowledge.

"But where's the use of thinking about these things now?" he replied; "it isn't what we were then, Vread, but what we are now, that we ought to think of."

"But, sure, Frank," said the simple-minded creature, "one cannot prevint the memory from goin' back to the early times, when we wor happy, and when the world was no trouble to us."

There was a pause, and after a little she added, "I dunna is the night clearin'?"

Finnerty rose, and proceeding to the door, looked out a moment, then went to the corner of the house to get a better view of the sky, after which he returned.

"The mist is gone," he observed, "from the mountains, and I suppose the boys will soon begin to come."

"Throth, Frank," she replied, "I hate these nightly meetin's that you hould here—all this plottin' and plannin' isn't nor can't be good."

"You hate them! an' who the ould *diaoul* cares whether you do or not? I allow them this house to meet in, bekaise it's large and far from the polis. A house down in the country, where they might pop in on them, wouldn't be so safe; here, however, no one would suspect them of meetin', and from the way the house is situated, no one could come upon us widout bein' known or seen. *You* hate! that indeed!"

"An' what do they meet for, Frank? if it's a fair question!"

"It's not a fair question, an' you have no business to ax; still if you want to know, and if it can make you anything the wiser, you shall hear. It's to break a Millstone they meet."

"To brake a millstone, *inagh!* Oh, sorra a word of that I believe. Sure there's no millstone here?—if you want to break millstones you must go farther up—to Carnmore, where they make them. Sorra millstone's here, I know."

"You know—oh, how much you know! I tell you, there's a great Millstone that covers and grinds the whole kingdom, or at least the greatest parts of it—that's the Millstone we want to brake, and that we will brake."

"When did you hear from Mark Ratigan, or see him?"

"Mark Ratigan is snug and comfortable as a laborin' boy wid Magistrate Driscol that's in—hem—but listen to me, now if you should meet Mark anywhere down the country, you're neither to call him Mark nor Ratigan, otherwise you may be the manes of hangin' the poor boy."

"Throth, an' by all accounts, he'll come to the gallows yet."

"Well, and many a betther man did. I expect him and Hourigan both here to-night."

"An' what name does he go by now?" she asked.

"By the name of Phil Hart; and remember when there's any stranger present, you're never to call him anything else—but above all things, and upon the peril of your life, never call him Mark Ratigan."

"And do you think," replied his wife, "that I won't take care not to do it? But, Frank, tell me what was Mogue Moylan doin' here the night before last?"

"Only to let me know that he and a Misther M'Carthy—a great friend of his and of two good creatures—Magistrate Driscol and Procthor Purcel—wor to come out shootin' on the mountains to-day and to ax if I would prevent them."

"An' did you give them lave?" she inquired.

A very peculiar expression passed over the dark grim features of her husband. "Did I give them lave?" he replied; "well, indeed, you may take your davy, I did. Why would I refuse a dacent gintleman, and a friend of Mogue Moylan's lave to shoot? Poor dacent Mogue, too, that loves thruth and religion so well—ha! ha! ha!—whisht!—here's some one."

The words were scarcely uttered, when our friends, M'Carthy and Mogue, made their appearance in the caretaker's house,

both evidently in a fatigued state, especially M'Carthy, who had not been so well accustomed to travel over mountain scenery as his companion.

"Well, blessed be God that we have got the roof of a house over us at last!" exclaimed Mogue. "Frank Finnerty, how are you? an' Vread, achora, not forgettin' you—my hand to you both, but we're lost—especially this gentleman, Mr. M'Carthy—a great friend of Mr. O'Driscol's and Procthor Purcel's—but a betther man than either o' them, I hope.'

"I am fairly knocked up, I admit," said M'Carthy—"in fact, I am more jaded than I ever was in my life."

"Take a chair, sir," said Finnerty; "you are welcome at all events, and I am glad to see you, or any friend of Mogue's; take this chair, sir—and—here, Mogue, do you take a stool; you must be both in a sad state, sure enough."

"Thank you, Frank," replied Mogue, "oh, then, bad cess to it for a dirty mist—God pardon me for cursin' the poor mist though, for sure it wasn't it's fault, the crathur of a mist. We oughn't to curse anything that God has made, but indeed I'm a great sinner that way, God forgive me; howandever as I was sayin', only for it afther all, Mr. Francis, it's atin' your comfortable dinner, or rayther drinkin' your fine wine you'd be now at Mr. Purcel's illigant table, instead of bein' here as you are, however, sure it's good to have a house over our heads any way."

Finnerty and his wife heaped more turf on the fire, and the poor woman, with that kind spirit of hospitality and sympathy for which her countrywomen are so remarkable, told them that they must necessarily be hungry, and said she would lose no time in providing them with refreshment.

"Many thanks," replied M'Carthy, "it is not refreshment, but rest we require; we have had more refreshments of every kind with us than he could use, and it is well we were so provident, otherwise we never would or could have reached even this house alive. Such a day I have never spent—we have done nothing but wade through this d——d mist for the last six or eight hours, without the slightest knowledge of whereabout we were."

"Well, well, Mr. Francis, sure it's one comfort that we're safe at all events," said Mogue; "only I'm frettin' myself about the onaisiness they'll all feel at home, I mane in Mr. Purcel's, about you. Do you know now, that a thought strikes me, sir; I'm fresher than you are a good deal. Now what if I'd run home and make their minds aisy in the first place, and get Jerry Joyce to bring the car up for you as far as the mountain road? You can rest yourself here in the manetime, and Frank Finnerty will see you safe that far. I'll carry the gun and things with me too—so that you'll have a lighter tramp down the hills."

This arrangement was precisely what M'Carthy could have wished.

"Thank you, Mogue, for thinking of this; you are a considerate kind fellow, and I cordially admit that I owe my life to you this day. Had you not been with me I must have lost my way and perished in the mountains."

Mogue and Finnerty exchanged glances, which, however, did not escape the observation of the wife, who thoroughly understood those changes of expression, which reflected her husband's darker and sterner purposes.

"Why, then, Misther Frank, that I may be happy but I am glad I was with you, so I am, for indeed only for me I don't think, sure enough, that ever you'd see this house to-night. There's some spirits left here still, and as I'm for another stretch, I don't think a glass of it will do me, or for that matther, Frank Finnerty here, any harm. You can see me down the hills a piece, Frank; and you, Mr. Francis, might throw yourself on the bed a while, and get an hour's sleep or so."

This too was agreed to—Mogue and Finnerty took each a glass of whiskey, as did Mrs. Finnerty, by permission of her husband, and in a few minutes she and M'Carthy were left by themselves.

After the two worthies had been gone a few minutes, she proceeded to the door, and as the night had now become tolerably light, she looked out, but with a great deal of caution. At first she saw no person, but in walking in the shadow of the house, along the sidewall to the left, she was able to observe five or six persons coming towards her husband and Moylan in a body; she saw that they stopped and were in close conversation, pointing frequently towards the house as they spoke. She returned to M'Carthy with the same caution, and, approaching him, was about to speak, when dread of her husband supervened for the moment, and she paused like a person in doubt. The peculiar glare and the satanic smile which her husband gave to Mogue, who, by the way, seemed perfectly to understand it, oppressed her with an indistinct sense of approaching evil which she could neither shake off, nor separate from the strange gentleman to whom their glances evidently referred. She remembered also to have heard her husband say upon one occasion

when he was drunk, that Mogue Moylan was the deepest villain in the barony—ay, or in the kingdom; and that only for his cowardice he would be a man after his own heart. 'Twas true, she knew that he had contradicted all this afterwards when he got sober, and said it was the liquor that caused him to speak as he did, that Mogue was a good kind-hearted crature, who loved truth, and was one of the most religious boys among them

This, however, did not satisfy her; the impression of some meditated evil against their temporary guest was too strong to be disregarded, and on recollecting that Mogue had been up with her husband only the evening but one before, as if to prepare him for something unusual, the couviction arose to an alarming height.

We have said that this woman was a poor passive creature, whose life was a mere round of almost mechanical action. This, to be sure, so far as regarded her own domestic duties, and in general every matter in which her husband's opinions and her own could clash, was perfectly true. She was naturally devoid, however, of neither heart nor intellect, when any of her fellow-creatures happened to come within the range of her husband's enmity or vengeance, as well as upon other occasions too, and it was well known that she had given strong proofs of this. Her life in general appeared to be one long lull, but, notwithstanding its quietude, there was, under circumstances of crime or danger, the brooding storm ready to start up into action.

"Sir," said she, on returning into the house, "I'm a plain and ignorant woman, so that you needn't feel surprised or alarmed at anything I am goin' to say. I hope you will pardon me, sir, when I ax if you seen my husband before, or if you know him either more or less?"

M'Carthy did feel surprised, and replied in the negative to both points of her question —"I do not know your husband," he said, "nor have I to my knowledge ever seen him until to-night; may I beg to inquire why you ask?"

"It's not worth your while," she replied, "it was a mere thought that came into my head: but you and Mogue Moylan never had a dispute, sir?"

"Why, what can put such a notion into your head, my good woman? Certainly not. Mogue and I have been always on the best of terms."

She paused again for some minutes, after which, she said, in a voice not audible. "There's something in the wind for all that. Sir," she proceeded, "you'll think me odd, but will you let me ax if you wor ever threatened or put on your guard, of if you know of any enemy you have that would wish to injure you?"

M'Carthy now started, and, looking at her with a gaze of equal curiosity and astonishment, replied, "Your language, my good woman, is beyond doubt very strange—why do you ask me these questions?"

"Answer me first, if you plaise," she replied.

"I have certainly been put on my guard," he returned, "and informed that I ought to be cautious, for that I had an enemy and that danger was before me."

"When, and in what way did this happen?"

"I shall make no further communication on the subject," he replied, "until you speak more plainly."

"Then," she proceeded, "I'm afeard there's danger over you this night, if God hasn't said it."

"Not, I trust, while I am under the protection of your husband and Mogue Moylan."

She shook her head. "If you haven't something better to depend upon, I wouldn't think myself overly safe; but you didn't answer the last question I axed you. How wor you warned, and who warned you?"

He then gave her a brief account of the rencounter he had with the Whiteboys, and alluded to the unknown but friendly individual who had put him on his guard.

"I knew it," she exclaimed, "I knew it; I couldn't mistake the look that passed between them. Now, in God's name," she said, "if you're able to drag a limb afther you at all, start out o' this and save yourself. and, let what will happen, I entreat, for the love of God, that you won't mention *my* name."

This he faithfully promised; "But," replied he to her warning, "I really am not able to escape, and I cannot think that your husband would injure a man who never offended him."

"But that's not the way they do sich things; it's not the man you offended that will injure you, but some blackguard stranger that he gets to do it for him, and that you'll know nothing about. In God's name, I say, be off out o' this. Even as a stranger you can hardly be safe, and if you wish to know why, whisper," and she spoke so low as only barely to be heard, "there's a meeting of Whiteboys to be here to-night; anyhow, you're the friend of O'Driscol and Procthor Purcel, and that same would be enough to make them give you a knock. Don't face home," said she, "or you'll be likely to meet them, but take the mountains wanst more on

your head. Get out upon the road at Altanaveenan and you may be safe. God of Glory!" she exclaimed, "here they are—but watch my face and be guided by me—here, throw yourself into that bed below and pretend to sleep—I'll do what woman can, but I'm afeared we lost our chance."

M'Carthy distinctly heard them laughing as they approached the door, and, in accordance with the advice he had got, he went to the lower part of the house and lay down on the bed, where he closed his eyes and breathed like one asleep. He now began to investigate Mogue's conduct, in persisting to bring him by so circuitous a sweep such a distance out of his way, aud decidedly contrary to his wishes. He hesitated, however, to inculpate Mogue, who certainly could not have anticipated or brought on the fog, which had occasioned them to wander for such a length of time among the mountains. Then, on the other hand, he deprived him of his gun and ammunition, but might not that also have been from motives of kindness?

In the meantime, eight or ten men came into the house each and all with their faces blackened, and some of them as before wearing shirts outside their dress; and this he could see from the position of the bed where he lay. The chat among themselves and with Mrs. Finnerty was not, as is the case in romances, either mysterious or awful. On the contrary, it was light and pleasant, and by no means calculated to heighten M'Carthy's fears; who, to say truth, however, although resolute and full of courage, would as lief been spending the evening with his friend the proctor.

"Well, Vread," said one of them, "any news in the mountains?"

"News in the mountains!" exclaimed Vread, "well, indeed, that's good."

"Any deaths or marriages among the grouse, eh?"

Vread, as we have said, had got a glass of spirits, a circumstance which, to a low heart but a kind one like hers, may probably have accounted for a portion of her energy, as well as of her sympathy with the apprehended danger to M'Carthy.

"Troth," she replied, with more vivacity than might have been expected from her, "when you spake to a dacent woman it ought to be with a clane face at any rate."

"Why, Vread, how can you say it's dirty," replied the fellow, "when you know *I washed* it before I came out?"

"It must be in the divil's basin, then," she replied, "for if one can judge by their eyes, you're more like one of his childre than your honest father's, whoever he was or is. Troth, I'm afeard it's a dirty business you're all about to-night, if a body is to take you by your looks."

"Why, then," observed another, "who 'ud think that poor die-away Vread had so much spunk in her? Vread," he proceeded, "you must a been a great beauty wanst upon a time; a very purty face you had, they say."

"Whatever it was," she replied, "I thank God I was never ashamed to show it like too many of my neighbors."

"Don't be too sure that *we're* your neighbors, Vread."

"Troth, I hope not," she returned; "I don't think *my* neighbors 'ud be consarned in sich disgraceful work, as I'm afraid brings yez out. Faugh upon you all! its unmanly."

Her husband, accompanied by six or eight more, now made his appearance; a circumstance which at once put an end to the part that his wife was disposed to bear in their conversation.

Other chat of various character then took place, in which, however, M'Carthy, who now watched them closely, could observe that they did not all join.

"Whisht," said one of them, "is there anybody asleep in the house? I think I hear some one snorin'!"

"There is," said Finnerty, "a gentleman that was out shootin' to-day wid a servant-man of Mr. Purcel's the procthor—named Mogue Moylan."

"And a very great scoundrel is Mogue Moylan," said one of them, with a wink at the rest.

"Well, no," said Finnerty, "I think not—poor Mogue's a dacent, quiet crature, and has a great regard for truth and religion."

M'Carthy, from his position the bed, had, by means of a fortunate rift in the blankets, a complete view of the whole party, and he could mark with accuracy, in consequence of their black faces, every grin now made distinctly visible by their white teeth.

"Who is the gentleman that snores so beautifully?" asked another of them.

"He is a gentleman named O'Connor," replied poor Vread, anxious, if possible, even at the risk of much subsequent abuse and ill-treatment, to conceal his name.

"Ay," said Finnerty, corroborating her; much, indeed, to her astonishment, "he is a Mr. O'Connor, I believe, a very handsome-lookin', fine young fellow."

"What the blazes," said another of them, "keeps *him?* Surely he ought to be here before now. Had Mr. O'Connor good sport?"

"How could he," replied Finnerty, "wid the fog that was on the mountains?"

At this moment an individual made his appearance, whom it was impossible to look

upon without being most forcibly struck by his figure. He was a broad-shouldered, muscular, powerful man, with immensely large limbs; his hair was black, and a huge pair of whiskers of the same color stretched across his cheeks, met at his chin, and ran down in an unbroken line round a huge and remarkably well-set neck. The moment he entered, and before he had time to speak, two or three of them instantly placed their fingers significantly upon their lips, as if to indicate silence, apprehensive, as M'Carthy at the time thought, lest his voice might be recognised. Another of them then whispered something to him, and whatever the secret was, it caused him to glance for a moment, and involuntarily, towards the bed. All that he spoke afterwards was uttered in whispers.

CHAPTER X.

The Sport Continued.

Finnerty's house, which had been built for more purposes than were necessary for the accommodation of a caretaker or gamekeeper, was simply a plain apartment, tolerably large, with room enough in it for a couple of beds; to this was added a shooting-lodge for the owner of the mountains, which consisted of three or four bed-rooms opening from a well-sized dining-room, and a kitchen distinct from the apartment which constituted the dwelling of the gamekeeper, being that which Finnerty, as such, then occupied. It was in the dining-room of the shooting-lodge that the Whiteboy meetings were uniformly held, although of late it had been usual for those who attended them to sit in Finnerty's house until the hour had arrived for commencing business, when they adjourned to the other. We should say that the gamekeeper's house, though under the same roof, as it is termed, with the shooting-lodge, was distinct from it in other respects; that is to say, there was no internal communication between them.

"Who was that fellow that we met with you a while ago?" asked one of them a second time, as if having forgotten his name.

"Poor Mogue Moylan," replied Finnerty, "and sadly bate down he was wid this day's work; I advised him to go to bed as soon as he could, and refresh himself by a good sleep."

"Advise!" said a voice, that almost made M'Carthy start, "it's aisier to give good advice than it is to take it; Mogue's not the only fool in this world that won't take good advice when it's given."

There could be no mistaking his voice. M'Carthy at once recognized that of the unknown friend who had warned him of danger on the night he encountered the Whiteboys, as already described.

"Come," proceeded he, "it is time we should commence business and settle the affairs of the nation at wanst; throth," he added, with a laugh, "if I was the same nation, and had a pair of good legs undher me—"

"Of what?" said the person with the black whiskers, who was evidently their leader, "of what?"

"Of ginerals like Bonnypart and Sarsfield, I'd soon have the country clear and the millstone pavin' the roads under our feet, as it will be before long, plaise God. Come, then, to business."

They accordingly proceeded to the adjoining house, with the exception of Finnerty himself, who, whether for the sake of safety, or rather for the purpose of watching M'Carthy, remained at his own fireside. His wife, on seeing this, pretended to be engaged with some domestic matter about the dresser, on which she placed a freshly lit rushlight, and availing herself of her position behind the back of her husband, who sat with his face towards the bed, she slightly raised her hands and eyes, as if to intimate that escape, she feared, was impossible.

It is incredible, the reaction which a new sensation, especially of joy or terror, or, indeed, of any feeling that is strong, superinduces upon the spirit, under circumstances of peculiar danger or interest. M'Carthy's fatigue, for instance, had now as completely departed from him as if he had not been abroad that day, and in consequence of the significant hint which he had received through the voice of his mysterious friend, he felt that if an opportunity were only offered him he would use the two legs to which his friend had alluded, when checked by the stern voice of their leader, with as much agility as ever they possessed during his life. It was this hint which made him feel certain, for the first time, that he was in imminent danger.

Half an hour had now elasped, and it was evident, from the listening attitudes and frequent startings of Finnerty, that the debate in the lodge was high and serious. At length, one of the society hurriedly made his appearance, exclaiming, in a kind of condensed and agitated whisper, "Come in and help us—they won't stand the thing, there's only three *for* us."

Finnerty took the candle; and, after signing to the person to go out, brought it close to M'Carthy's eyes, who opened his mouth

and assumed with singular success all the deep insensible relaxation which characterizes heavy sleep. Finnerty even shook him, and said, "Hadn't you better get up, sir, and come to meet the car?" He addressed a log, however, and after another more careless and evidently satisfied glance, he laid down the candle, and then said to his wife, in a whisper, which, however, M'Carthy could hear, "The moment he wakens let us know."

Vread, who would not seem to attach any importance to the circumstance, simply nodded, by way of acquiescence, and her husband went to join those in the lodge.

In every country whose political, commercial, or social relations, are not properly settled, or in which there exists a struggle between the principles at variance with civil order and those of enlightened progress, there will always be found a considerable portion of the population ripe and ready for violence and crime. This is an undisputable fact, and one the more dangerous too, inasmuch as crime is usually stripped by these misguided wretches of its inherent guilt, and looked upon as a necessary instrument, or, in other words, as a means to work out an end. It is true, the relative portion of the reckless and guilty is, in this country at least, considering its population, exceedingly small, for we all know how miserable the number of those who are at any time necessary to involve the character of a district at large, or inculpate the moral reputation of a whole country. At the same time, we must unquestionably admit, that, if we contrast the population of the country at large, and the frequency of crime in it, joined to its character of cool and deliberate atrocity, with that of the sister countries, we must candidly acknowledge, that the conduct of the people, even taking the proportions I have mentioned into consideration, is not only without parallel in modern times, but that religion is not merely a name, but, in every sense, incapable, whether by its internal spirit or mal-administration, of discharging to society those great functional duties which mankind have a right to expect from it. But now to return.

Finnerty had joined the meeting; his wife, approaching M'Carthy, said, in a low whisper—

"They have some argument about you, whatever it is. However, with God's assistance, I'll venthur to do a thing that may be dangerous enough to myself, at any rate; but what do I care about that, if I can save an unoffendin' fellow-creature from harm?—Stay where you are then, till I come in again."

She went out as she spoke, and after an interval of about six or eight minutes again made her appearance.

"I can't hear them plain enough," she said, on her return, "but whatever it is, I can undherstan' that the most of them all is against it. In God's name, at any rate, stay where you are—they're risin' to go home, and as the night's light they'd be sure to pounce upon you if you attempted to escape. Whatever I can do to save you from harm here I will."

The poor woman's escape from detection, while performing the friendly office of listening, was indeed very narrow. Short and hurried as her last advice to M'Carthy was, the words in which she conveyed it had scarcely been uttered, when her husband, accompanied by three persons, their faces still blackened, made his appearance. They took seats in silence around the fire, and one of them, handing over a bottle of whiskey to Finnerty, merely nodded, as much as to say, pass that about. Finnerty accordingly did so, and each of them drank a glass or two, after which they were silent as before. This silence, to M'Carthy, began to wear a solemn and a fearful aspect, especially as he knew enough of the habits of the people to be aware, that in drinking whiskey is often resorted to in order to deaden their moral perceptions, or, in other words, as a stimulant to crime.

At length, after about a quarter of an hour had elapsed, and three of them—that is to say, two of the strangers and Finnerty—had each drank three glasses of spirits, the fourth, who had taken only one glass, beckoned to the other two to follow him.

"I think," said he, "they are all gone, and the coast is clear."

In this man's voice, M'Carthy, to his infinite delight, once more recognized that of his unknown well-wisher. Be this as it may, he and the other two left the house, and, as the reader is no doubt interested in their movements, we shall permit him to follow them to the dining-room of the shooting lodge, where the meeting had just been held.

"Very well, then," he proceeded, "it is so best, as none of us can become a traitor against the rest. Shew me your pistols; for, as I'm an ould soger, I'll regulate them for you better than you'll be able to do yourselves.

He accordingly took their pistols, examined them closely, fixed the powder in the pans, adding a fresh supply of priming from a little goat's horn which he carried in his pocket. He then took out his own, which he simply looked at, and again returned to his pocket.

"Now," said he, "our best plan is to take him about the small o' the back, when he's before us, one only at a time; you," said he, addressing the tallest, "will fire first; you,"—to the other—"next if he misses him; and, as I'm the boy that doesn't miss my mark, I'll take him down, never fear, if he should escape either of you. Come now, let us go in and get him to his legs, that we may start."

On making their appearance again, Finnerty approached M'Carthy, and exclaimed as before, but on this occasion with a loud and earnest voice, "Come, sir, get up if you plaise; it's time for you to meet the car."

To this M'Carthy made no reply.

"Come, sir," repeated Finnerty, "bounce; hillo, I say, Mr. M'Carthy; up wid you, sir, the car will be waitin' for you;" and he gave him a slap on the shoulder as he spoke.

"Hallo!" exclaimed the pretended sleeper, "have a care—easy, easy—what's that? who are you?—eh—aw—oh, dear me, where am I?"

"In a friend's house, sir; get up, you know Mr. Purcel's car is waitin' for you at the mountain road below."

M'Carthy started to his feet, and on looking about him, exclaimed, "How is this, Finnerty? why are the faces of these men blackened?"

"Never you mind that, sir," replied Finnerty, "they are two or three poor fellows that's on their keepin' in regard to havin' paid their tithes against the will o' the people; an' they don't wish to be known, that's all."

"Well," replied M'Carthy, "that's their own affair, and neither yours nor mine, Finnerty. Come, then, are you ready? for I am."

"These boys, Mr. M'Carthy, has promised to take the best care of you while in their company, an' as they're goin' to the mountain road, where your're to meet the car, they'll bring you safe, sir."

"Most certainly not, Finnerty," replied the other; "I shall be escorted by no person or persons ashamed to show their faces. If you refuse to come, you break your word with me; but, in any event, I shall not travel with these men. I am too well aware of the disturbed state of the country, and that, being a friend of Mr. Purcel, I may not be popular. I consider myself, however, under your protection and under the protection of your roof, and for this reason I shall hold you accountable for my safety; and, at all events, unless you insist on expelling me, I shall remain where I am until morning."

"Why, if you insist upon it, I'll go," replied Finnerty, "and four friends about you will be betther and safer than one; but in troth, to tell you the truth, Mr. M'Carthy, I'm a'most fairly knocked up myself, havin' been down the counthry and through the hills the greater part of the day. I have a great number of cattle to look afther, an' am seldom off my foot."

"Don't, sir," said his wife, in tones which were now perfectly intelligible to him, "don't ax poor Frank to go wid you to-night; you'll be as well widout him, especially as the night's so bright and clear; he's tired indeed, and, be the same token, I don't like to be here in the clouds of the night, wid nobody wid me but myself."

"If you're a gintlemen, sir," said the friendly voice, "you won't take this honest man from his wife at such an hour o' the night. If you take *my* advice too, I'd recommend you to come along wid ourselves at wanst."

There was no mistaking the friendly voice embodied in these words, as well as in those of Mrs. Finnerty. M'Carthy accordingly replied:—

"Very, well, Finnerty, I will proceed with these men. I should indeed be sorry to cause you any additional fatigue, or to fetch you from your house at such an hour. I will therefore put myself under the protection and guidance of these worthy fellows, who, I hope, will remember that although a friend to Mr. Purcel personally, yet I am none to any harshness he may have resorted to for the recovery of his tithes."

"There's nobody here," replied the still friendly voice, "inclined to offer you any offense, bekaise you happen to be a friend to *Mr. Purcel*"—and there was a marked emphasis laid upon the name—"so now," the voice proceeded, "you may make your mind aisy on that head."

A singular but significant laugh proceeded from the other two, which, however, was repressed by a glance from "the friend," who said, "Come, boys, turn out; now, sir, the sooner we get over this journey the betther."

"Well, Finnerty," said M'Carthy, "many thanks for the hospitable shelter of your house, and to you also, Mrs. Finnerty, for your kindness and the trouble I have occasioned you."

Mrs. Finnerty's voice had now nearly abandoned her; and, as our young sportsman, after having shaken hands with her husband, now paid that compliment to herself, he perceived that the poor creature's hand was literally passive and cold as ice, whilst the words she attempted to utter literally died away unspoken on her lips.

Having got about a mile from the house, his unknown friend began to become loquacious, and related several anecdotes of success-

ful escape from the meshes and minions of the law, a theme in which his two companions seemed to take singular delight; for they laughed immoderately at every recorded victory in outwitting the legal functionaries aforesaid.

"I was wanst upon a time," he proceeded, "taken up for a resky;* the case bein,' you see, that we wanted the rent and the landlord wanted patience; so begad, at any rate, we gev the bloody bailiffs a thrifle for themselves, and the consequence was that we brought the cows back to a neighbor's place that belonged to another property, and the four bailiffs, poor creatures, lay upon the ground lookin' at us, an' never said ill we did it, for a raison they had; do you undherstand, boys?"

"Ay, we do undherstand; the bloddy thieves; divil break his neck that invinted rint, anyhow; sure there's no harm in wishin' that, the villain."

"Ay, an' tides,"† replied the other; "however, we'll settle that first, and then the rents will soon follow them; an' sure there's no harm in that aither."

"Well an' good:—no, divil a harm's in it;—well an' good: to make a long story short, they grabbed me in a house up in the mountains—not unlike Finnerty's, I think that's his name—where I was on my keepin'; so what 'ud you have of it, but we were comin' acrass the hills, jist as it might be said we are now—only there's none of us a prisoner, thank goodness—hem! Well, I said to myself, hit or miss, I'll thry it; I have a pair o' legs, an' it won't be my fault or I'll put them to the best use: an' for that raison it'll be divil take the hindmost wid us. Now listen, boys; I started off, an' one fellow that had a pistol let bang at me, but long life to the pistol, divil a one of it would go off; bang again came the other chap's, but 'twas ditto repaited, and no go any more than the other. Well, do you know now, that the third fellow—for there was only three af them, I must tell you—the third fellow, I'm inclined to think, was a friend at bottom; for the devil a one of him struv to break his heart in overtakin' me. Well, by that manes, I say, I got off from two of as double-distilled villains as ever wor born to die by suspinsion."

This narrative, the spirit of which was so acceptable to his two companions, and, if truth must be told, equally so to the third, was treasured up by M'Carthy, who felt that it ingeniously but cautiously pointed out to him the course he should adopt under his own peculiar circumstances. The consequence was, that on coming within about a couple of furlongs of a dark, narrow, thickly-wooded glen, through which he knew they must pass, he bolted off at the top of his speed, which, although very considerable for a man whose strength had been so completely exhausted by fatigue and the unusual slavery of that day's wandering through the mountains, was, notwithstanding, such as would never have enabled him to escape from his companions.

He had not gone a perch when the click of a pistol was heard, but no report; the fact having been, that the pistol missed fire, and did not go off.

"D——n your blood!" exclaimed the "friend" to the other, "fire, and don't let him escape;" the ruffian did so when click No. 2 was heard, but as before no report.

"Aisy," said the fellow who had fired first, pulling out a long Spanish dagger; "an inch or two of this is as safe as a bullet, any day; and by japers he won't escape it." He sprang after M'Carthy as he spoke, followed by his companion. The third man stepped a pace or two to the right, and levelling a long double-barrelled pistol, deliberately fired, when M'Carthy's first pursuer fell; the second man, however, with that remarkable quickness of wit which characterizes the Irish, in their outrages as well as in their pastimes, suddenly stooped, and taking the dreadful dagger out of the hands of the wounded man, continued the pursuit bounding after his foe with a spirit of vengeance and ferocity, now raised to the highest pitch. The stranger, seeing that M'Carthy was still in equal danger if not in still greater, for the now infuriated ruffian was gaining upon him, once more levelled his pistol—fired—and, as before, down came the intended assassin. He himself then sprang forward, as if in pursuit of M'Carthy, exclaiming, "Hell and fury, why did yez keep between me and him—I think he's hit; give me that dagger, and I'll go bail I'll make his body soon put six inches of it out of sight," and having uttered these words, he rushed forward, as if in pursuit of their victim.

After he had left them, the following brief dialogue took place between these two worthies:—

"Hourigan, blazes to me but I'm shot."

"Hell's perdition to the unlucky villain—so am I—where are you shot, Mark?"

"By japers, the blood's pourin' out from me in the thigh, an' I'm afeard I'm done for—blast his unlucky hand, the villain; I wisht I had my dagger in him. Where are *you* shot, Darby?"

"Oh, vo—vo—on the right hip—but—oh, sweet Jasus, what will become of us if

* A rescue. † Tithes.

we're to die here—may the devil clap his cruibs* in the sowl of him that done it!"

"Amin, I pray the blessed Saviour this night! Do you think, Darby, he was a traitor, and done it a purpose?"

"Oh, mavrone, oh!—if I die widout the priest, what'll become o' me, an' all the sins I have to answer?"

"I say, was the villain a traitor, do you think?"

"Mavrone, oh!—blessed Lord forgive me—well—I can hardly think so—didn't he volunteer along wid yourself an' myself—oh, sweet Jasus! what a life I lead—oh, Mark Ratigan, Mark Ratigan, what will become o' me!—I swore away the lives of two innocent men—I proved three alibis for three of as black villains as ever stretched a rope or charged a blunderbush! 'Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom *come*'—oh, Lord! forbid *that* yet a while! could you join in a *Leadhan wurrah?*"

"Blast you, you thick-headed vagabone! don't you know it's wrong to call me Mark Ratigan—isn't Phil Hart my name now?—no, I tell you, that I can't join you in a *Leadhan wurrah*—nor I didn't think you wor such a d—d cowardly hound as you are—can't you die—if you're goin' to die—like a man, an' not like an ould woman? Be my sowl, Darby, my boy, afther this night I'll never trust you again. It's yourself that 'ud turn traitor on your country and her cause, if you got the rope and hangman at your nose."

"Holy Mary, mother of God! pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, amin! Oh, sweet Jasus! have parsecution on me this night, an' spare me if it's your blessed will, till I get time to repint properly anyhow. Mark, darlin', are you gettin' waker, for I am?"

"To blazes wid you, and don't bother me—no, I'm not—I've tied my handkerchy about the place I was shot in, an' stopped the blood—eh—here—well done, Mark—hem—Phil Hart, I mane—bravo—see that now—instead of bleatin' like a dyin' sheep, I've stopped the blood, an' here I am able to stand and walk. Come," said he, approaching his companion, "where are you shot?—let us see?"

He stooped down, and on examining the wound by the light of the moon, perceived at once that it was not all imagination and evil conscience. He consequently forced him to his legs, then bound up the wound with the fellow's handkerchief just as he had done his own, and in a few minutes they were able to resume their journey, slowly, it is true, and on the part of Ratigan, whose wound was the more serious, with a good deal of difficulty and pain, notwithstanding his hardihood.

In the meantime, M'Carthy was soon overtaken by the friendly Whiteboy, whose speed of foot was indeed extraordinary. On seeing the dagger in his pursuer's hand—for such he deemed him to be—he had prepared himself for resistance, the fact being, than in consequence of their blackened faces and the state of perturbation and excitement in which he felt himself, he was in no condition to recognize any of the party unless by their voices.

"Don't be alarmed," exclaimed the stranger, approaching him, "I have saved your life for this night most likely, by takin' the life of them that intended to murder you."

"I certainly feel," replied M'Carthy, "that I owe my life to you, and I know not what return I can make you for it. But why should I speak so, since I am ignorant of your name, as well as of everything whatsoever concerning you? As to the other two persons, I cannot understand why they should attempt to murder me, as I am not conscious of having given offence to any person."

"You have never given offence to them," replied the stranger; "but unfortunately this part of the country's in such a state of feelin' at the present time, that it's as aisy to find one man to murdher another as it would be to get a man to shoot a dog. No, sir; you never offended these men, but they were set on to take your life by a man who hates you."

"Well, since you have been on more than one occasion so generous to me, can you not let me know who that person is?"

"No, sir; that man has a hundred—ay, ten hundred eyes through the counthry—in the shape of spies—and five times as many hands any time he may wish for them. You may thank a friend of yours for sendin' me to save your life this night. Your family have been friends to him and to me too, although you don't know it. As for me, I go with him heart an' hand in puttin' down the tithes, but I'll always save the life of a friend if I can; and indeed I have been forced to shoot these two men, in ordher to save yours to-night. I must go now and see what state they're in—whether alive or dead; but before I go, listen:—tell the procthor that he has a fearful account to meet, and that soon; let neither him nor his sons be fool-hardy; say to him, that the wisest thing he can do is to remove himself and his family into the town of Lismagola; or, if he won't do that, to keep his house half-filled with

* *Cruibs*—talons—claws.

fire-arms; for I tell you now, the time is not long till he'll need them all. Tell them not to go out at night at all, or even by day, unless well armed; and do you yourself take the same advice; and now good-night. But, listen again: there, you see, is the spot below there, where the car was to meet you; but there's no car in it, and even if there was, I wouldn't recommend you to go on it; and if you're goin' to O'Driscol's don't go up the avenue, but by the back way, behind the garden, for it's very likely there's another man—and a fearful man, on the look-out for you, in case you should be missed by us. Farewell, for the present."

A few minutes brought this kind-hearted Whiteboy back to the spot where Hourigan and his companion, who was also his cousin, fell. He was a good deal surprised, but still highly gratified, at not finding them where they had fallen, as it was a proof to him that his aim at either had not been fatal, as he certainly had no intention of taking their lives, or of rendering them any greater injury than the infliction of such wound as might put an end to their pursuit of M'Carthy. On advancing a little farther, he saw them proceeding, by a different but shorter path towards the inland country; and being now satisfied, from their appearance, that they had not been mortally wounded, he left them to reach home as best they might, and proceeded himself in another direction.

CHAPTER XI.

The Sport Still Continued.

It is necessary to say here, that Moylan had not the slightest intention of sending Mr. Purcel's car to meet our friend M'Carthy, inasmuch as he never for a moment supposed that this devoted youth was likely to leave the mountains alive. His own egregious vanity, engrafted on a cowardly, jealous, and malignant disposition, prompted him, ever since he had been induced by the pedlar, out of a mere banter, to suppose that he had engaged the affections of Julia Purcel, to look upon this young man as a person that ought to be got out of his way. In this manner there was, indeed, a peculiar combination of circumstances against M'Carthy; for it so happened that Moylan, whilst anxious to wreak his own jealousy and hatred upon him, was, at the same time, executing the will of another individual who stood behind the scenes. On every side, then, M'Carthy was surrounded by mortal dangers that were completely vailed in obscurity. During this very night it was resolved to assassinate him, be the consequences what they might; and if he should escape, in the one instance, he was to be sought after in whatever house he took refuge, with the exception only of Purcel's, which his enemies were, for the present, afraid to attack. Every avenue and road leading to it however, was watched, with a hope that if he escaped elsewhere, they might shoot him down from behind a hedge.

The condition of all secret and illegal societies in Ireland is, indeed, shocking and most detestable, when contemplated from any point of view whatsoever. In every one of them—that is, in every local body or branch of such conspiracy—there is a darker and more secret class, comparatively few in number, who undertake to organize the commission of crimes and outrages; and who, when they are controlled by the peaceably-disposed and enemies to bloodshed, always fall back upon this private and blood-stained clique, who are always willing to execute their sanguinary behests, as it were, *con amore*. In other cases, however, as we have stated before, even the virtuous and reluctant are often compelled, by the dark and stern decrees of these desperate ruffians, to perpetrate crimes from which they revolt. It was, therefore, in pursuance of these abominable principles that the arrangements for M'Carthy's murder were made on the night in question.

Jerry Joyce perceiving, as he had feared, that M'Carthy did not return to dinner, at once came to the determination that he would go to Finnerty's, where, from his connection with Whiteboyism, he knew that a meeting of them was to be held on that night. He accordingly armed himself with a case of pistols, which he had been allowed to keep for the preservation of his master's family and premises, in case they should be attacked. He had not gone, however, within two miles of the mountains, when he met Mogue on his way home, carrying M'Carthy's, or rather John Purcel's double gun, and other shooting gear.

"Why, Mogue," said he, "how does this come? Where's Mr. M'Carthy from you?"

"Oh! that I may never sin—but sure I know I will—for I'm a great sinner—God forgive me!—but anyhow, that I may never sin, if I'm worth the washin'! Oh! Jerry, darlin', sick a killin' day as we had I never passed, an' I'm well accustomed to the mountains. Sure, now, Jerry, if you have one spunk of common charity in your composition, you'll take me up on your back and carry me home, otherwise I'll lie down on the road, and either die at wanst or sleep it out till mornin'."

"But that's not tellin' me where you left Mr. M'Carthy," replied Jerry, whose apprehensions were not at all lessened by this indirect and circuitous answer. "Where is he, and what has become of him?"

"Of all the mists that ever riz out o' the airth, or fell from the blessed heavens above us—glory be to the name of God! we had it on the mountains this whole day. Why, now, Jerry, a happy death to me, but you might cut it with a knife, at the very least, an' how we got through it, I'm sure, barrin' the Providence of God, I dunna. But indeed we're far from bein' worthy of the care He takes of us."

While speaking, he had, as an illustration of his fatigue, taken his seat upon the grassy ditch, which bounded in the road, and altogether enacted the part of a man completely broken down by over-exertion.

"But, Mogue, my pious creature, you're not tellin' us where you left——"

Why, then, salvation to you, for one Jerry, do you think it's ait him I did? Sound asleep in Frank Finnerty's I left him, where he'll be well taken care of. Oh! thin, if ever a poor inoffensive young gintleman—for sure he's that by birth, as we say, at all events, as well as by larnin'—was brought to death's door with this day's work, he was. I thought to flatther him home if he could come, but it was no go. An' thin, agin, I thought it was a sin to ax' him; an' so for a afraid they'd be alarmed at home, I was on my way to make all your minds aisy. An' whisper hether, Jerry—not that I look upon Frank Finnerty as the man he ought to be, for we all know the narrow escape he had for the murder of Tom Whisky's son—still an' all, he's safe wid Finnerty, bekaise *he* knows that *we* know where he is, and that if anything happened him we'd hould him accountable."

"Well," replied Jerry, affecting a satisfaction which, however, he did not feel, "I'm glad he's safe; for, as you say, Mogue, although Frank Finnerty is pretty well known, still what could tempt him to harm Mr. M'Carthy?"

"I know that," said Mogue; "still an' all, the nerra foot I'd brought him to his house, only we stumbled on it out o' the mist, by mere accident, an' by coorse it was the next to us. Goodness' sake, Jerry, carry these things home for me, will you? I'm not able to mark the ground—do, avick, an' I'll offer up a pathran avy for you before I lay down my head this night, tired as I am."

"Well, begad, it's myself that would, Mogue, but you see, as I'm out for a while, an' so near my poor mother's, throth I'll slip over and see how she is, the crature; only for that, Mogue, I'd lighten you of the shootin' things wid a heart an' a half."

"But sure you can see your poor mother, the crature, any other evenin'? Do come back, Jerry, an' I'll do twiste as much for you agin. Oh! oh! milia murther! I'm not able to get on my legs. Give me your hand, Jerry—oh! oh!—well, well—what's this at all? Jerry, achora, don't desart me now, 'an me in the state you see. I'll never get home by myself—that's what I won't—mavrone, oh! what's this?—I'm fairly kilt."

"Well, but the thruth is, Mogue," replied his companion, "that I got a message from my mother, sayin' that she's not well, and wishes most partiklarly to see me about my sisther Shibby's marriage. Now, Mogue, you're a pious and religious boy, an' would be the last to encourage me to neglect a parent's wishes: ay, or that would allow me to do so, even if I intended it; throth I know it's a scoulden' you'd give me if I did."

Mogue's flank was completely turned; he was, in fact, most adroitly taken upon his own principle; his egregious vanity was ticked by this compliment to his piety; and, as he was at no time a person of firm character, he gave way.

Thought Jerry to himself, as he left this plausible hypocrite, to proceed home under his affected fatigue, "I know there's mischief on foot to-night, for if there wasn't I an' others 'ud be summoned to this meetin'; there will be nobody there, I suppose, but the *black squad* or the *bloodmen*. It'll go hard wid me, at any rate, but I'll send one there that'll bring Mr. M'Carthy from among them widout suspicion; an' so here goes to lose no time about it."

He then plunged into the most solitary and remote fields, and pursued his way, anxious, if possible, to meet no one, much less any of those who belonged, as he said, "to the black squad."

Of late, the state of public feeling upon the subject of tithes had become so violent and agitated, that Mr. Purcel's immediate friends found it almost a matter involving their personal safety to dine with him. At all events, such of them as accepted his hospitality took care to leave his house very early, and to keep themselves well armed besides. On the evening in question, no one had been invited but M'Carthy and Fergus O'Driscol. The heroic magistrate, however, ever since the receipt of the threatening letter, would not suffer his son (who certainly participated in none of his father's cowardice), to dine abroad at all, lest his absence and well-known intrepidity might induce the Whiteboys, or other enemies of law, to attack the house when its principal defence

was from home. The evening, therefore, hung heavy on their heads at Longshot Lodge, which was the name of Purcel's residence, especially upon that of the fair Julia, who felt not merely disappointed, but unusually depressed by the unaccountable absence of her lover, knowing, as she did, the turbulence which prevailed in the country. She scarcely ate any dinner, and in the course of a short time retired to her own room, which commanded a view of the way by which he should approach the house, where she watched, casement up, until she heard a foot in the avenue, which, however, her acute ear, well accustomed to M'Carthy's, soon told her was not that of her lover. On looking more closely she perceived, however, that it was Mogue Moylan; and, unable to restrain her impatience, she raised the window still higher, and called down as Mogue passed under it, on his way round to the kitchen, but in a low, earnest voice, with, as Mogue thought, a good deal of confidential in it, "Is that Mogue?"

"Eh!" he exclaimed, struck almost on the instant into a state of ecstacy; "Is that Miss Julia?"

"Yes, Mogue," she replied, in the same low voice, "I do not wish to run the risk of speaking to you from this; stay there, and I will go to one of the windows of the front parlor."

"Well," thought Mogue, "it is come to this at last? oh, thin, but I was a blackguard haythen an' nothing else ever to think of you, Letty Lenehan, or any low-born miscreant like you. The devil blow her aist, waist, north, and south, the flipe o' blazes, and to think o' the freedoms she used to take wid me, as if she was my aquils; but sure, dam her cribs! whatever I intended to do, it wasn't to marry her, an' can I forget, moreover, the day she gave me the bloody nose, when I only went to take a small taste o' liberty wid the thief."

In the course of a minute or two, Julia made her appearance at the window, with, in fact, a blushing face, if it could have only been seen with sufficient light. Now that she stood within a couple of yards of Moylan, she felt all the awkwardness and embarrassment of the task she had undertaken, which was to inquire, without seeming to feel any personal interest, as to the cause of her lover's absence. In addition to the prevailing agitation, and the outrages arising from it, she had heard of so many accidents with sportsmen, so many guns had burst, so many explosions had taken place, and so many lives had been lost, that her warm fancy pictured his death in almost every variety of way in which a gun could occasion it. Owing to all this, she experienced a proportionable share of confusion and diffidence in managing her inquiries with proper address, and without betraying any suspicion of her motives.

"Mogue," said she, "I—hem—hem—I hope you don't feel fatigued after your sport?"

"Ah, then, there it comes," thought Mogue; "how the crature feels for me! an' even if I did, Miss Julia, sure one kind word when I come home is fit to cure it."

"And you are sure to get that, Mogue," replied Julia, who took it for granted that he referred to Letty Lenehan, "but whisper," she proceeded, still speaking in a low voice, from an apprehension of being heard making the proposed inquiries by any of her family, "are you alone?"

"I am, indeed, Miss Julia," he replied in a tone of such coaxing and significant confidence, as would have been irresistibly laughable had she understood why he used it, "I *am* alone, Miss Julia, and you needn't be either ashamed or daunted in sayin' whatever you like to me—maybe I could guess what you're goin' to say, but I declare to you, and that my bed may be in heaven, but, say what you will, you'll find me—*honor bright*—do you understand that, Miss Julia?"

"Well, I think I do, Mogue, and if I didn't think so, I wouldn't have watched your return to-night as I did, or been here to speak to you on the subject you say you know."

An' sure, Miss Julia, you might a known for some time past that I knew it; didn't I look like one that was up to it? An' listen hether, Miss Julia, my family was all honor bright; we wor great people in our day; sure we owned a big sweep of country long ago an' wor great sogers. We fought against the Sassenaghs, the dirty English bodaghs, an' because there was a lot of us ever an' always hanged from time to time, that's the raison why we have sich a hatred to the English law still, one an' all of us. Sure my grandfather, glory be to God, was hanged for killin' a Sassenagh gauger, and my own father, Miss Julia, did his endeavors to be as great as the best of them, knowin' no other way for to vex and revinge himself upon the dirty Sassenaghs of the country; for sure, you know yourself, it's full o' them—ay, about us in all directions. He borried a horse in a private way from one o' them, but then he escaped from that; he next had a 'bout at what they call'd perjury, although it was well known to us all that it was only his thumb he kissed, and, any how, the thing was done upon a Protestant Bible;

but, at all events, he went an' honest and honorably, as far as gettin' himself transported for parjury. I hope you understhand, Miss Julia, that I'm accountin' for any disparagin' observations you might a' heard against us, an' showin' you why we acted as we did."

"But, Mogue," said she, smiling at this most incomprehensible piece of family history, "I hope you don't intend to imitate the example or to share the fate of so many of your family!"

"You really hope so; now do you really *hope* so, Miss Julia?"

"Unquestionably; for granting you marry, as, I dare say you intend, would it not be a melancholy prospect for your wife to——"

"Why, then I do intend it; are you not satisfied, Miss Julia? and what is more, although it's my intention to violate the law in a private and confidential way, still I have no intention of bein' either hanged or transported by it; that I may be happy if I have ——No, for the sake of that wife, Miss Julia, do you understand, it's my firm intention to die in my bed if I can; I hope *you* feel that there's comfort in *that*."

"To whatever woman you make happy Mogue, there will be. Well, but, Mogue, tell me; had you a good day's sport?"

"Sorra worse then; God pardon me for swearin'," he replied. "There riz a mist in the mountains that a man could build a house wid, if there was any implements to be found, hard and sharp enough to cut it. All we got was a brace of grouse and a snipe or two."

"And—hem—well but—hem—why Mogue, you give but a very miserable account of the proceedings of the day. Had you any one with you?—Oh, yes, by the way, did I not see Mr. M'Carthy go out with you this morning?"

"Yes, Miss Julia, you did; he went out wid me, sure enough," replied Mogue, drily, and with rather a dissatisfied tone.

"He is a—hem, does he shoot well?"

"He shoots well enough, Miss Julia—when he pulls the trigger the gun goes off; but as for killin' birds, that my bed may be in heaven but they fly away laughin' at him."

"He came with you as far as O'Driscol's," she said, at once putting a query in the shape of an assertion, "and I suppose sent some apology to my father and brothers, for not having been here to dinner."

"Hem! come as far as Mr. O'Driscol's?" exclaimed Mogue; "troth he's about the poorest piece o' goods ever carried a gun—God help the unhappy woman that'll get him; for sorra thing he is but a mere excuse for a man. I left him lyin' like a half-hung dog, up in the mountains above."

Julia started, and almost screamed with terror at this account of her lover. "Gracious heavens, Moylan, what do you mean?" she exclaimed—"up in the mountains!—where and how in the mountains? Is he ill, or does he want aid or assistance?"

"No, Miss Julia; but the truth is, he's a poor cur of a creature that's not able to undertake a man's task at all; he's lyin' knocked up in Frank Finnerty's; moanin' and groanin' an' yowlin', like a sick hound; I had to carry or drag him over half the mountains; for, from the blessed hour of twelve o'clock this day, he wasn't able to put a foot undher him, an' he did nothing but blasphayme an' curse every one he *knew;* your fathers and brothers, your sisther, and mother, and yourself; he cursed and blasphaymed you all, helther skelther; I could bear all, Miss Julia till he came to run *you* down, an' 'tis well for him that I hadn't the gun in my hand when he did it, that's all; or, that I may never do an ill turn but I'd a' given him a touch o' the Moylan blood for your sake—an' now, Miss Julia," he proceeded, "I hope we understand one another. As for him he's a pitiful whelp!"

"Are you in jest or earnest?" she inquired, changing her tone.

"That luck may flow on me, but I'm in airnest, Miss Julia—but no matther for that, don't you let you spirits down, think of our great family; and remimber that them that was wanst great may be great agin. Plaise God we'll have back the forwhitled estates, when we get the Millstone broke, an' the Mill that ground us banished from the counthry; however, that will come soon; but in the mane time, Miss Julia, I have a saycret to tell you about him."

"About Mr. M'Carthy?" she asked, sadly puzzled as to the tendency and object of his conversation, but at the same time somewhat awakened to an indistinct interest, respecting this secret concerning her lover.

"Yes, miss; listen hether, Miss Julia; would you believe it that he, Mr. M'Carthy, is sworn, or any way as good as sworn, to take your father's life away?"

"No, Mogue," she replied firmly, but with good humor, "not a syllable."

"Well then," he proceeded, "if he did not swear to do it in plain words, he did as good. You won't braithe a syllable of this, Miss Julia; but listen still—You know the ruction that's through the counthry aginst tides?"

"I do, I am sorry to say."

"An' that the whole counthry is sworn Whiteboys, and that all the Whiteboys is

sworn, of coorse, to put an end to them. That's the oath they take now, miss, by all accounts."

"So they say Mogue."

"Well, miss, would you believe it, that that fellow, the ungrateful hound that he is, that same Francis M'Carthy, is at the head of them, is one of their great leaders, and is often out at night wid the villains, leadin' them on to disturbances, and directin' them how to act; ay, an' he doesn't like a bone in Mr. O'Driscol's body, any more than in your father's."

"Ha!—ha!—ha! very good, Mogue, but make it short—ha!—ha!—ha!—and who's your authority for all this?"

"Himself, miss, for a great part of it; it was this day, he wanted myself to become a Whiteboy; but I had the grace o' God about me, I hope, an' resisted the temptation. 'Mogue,' says he, 'you are a good Catholic, an' ought to join us; we're sworn to put down the tides altogether, an' to banish Protestantism out o' the counthry.'"

"But is not M'Carthy himself a Protestant?" said Julia.

"Not he, miss, he only turned to get a lob o' money from the Great College in Dublin above; sure they provide for any one that will turn, but he's a true Catholic at heart; an' when the time comes he'll show it."

"And you say he joins their meetings at night, Mogue?"

"That I may be blest, but he does, miss; and since you must know the truth, he's at one o' them this very night."

"Then you have told me a falsehood with respect to his fatigue?"

"He put me up to it, miss; and bid me say it; howandever my mind wasn't aisy undher it; and now you know the truth."

"And does he blacken his face as well as the other Whiteboys?"

"That hurt or harm may never come near me but he does that same; I have it from them that seen him and knew him, in spite o' black face an' all."

"Ha! ha! ha!—well good-night, Mogue, and many thanks for your most important and truthful secret."

"Before you go, Miss Julia, one other word; listen, there a man worth a ship load of him, that's in grate consate wid you—remember the ould families, Miss Julia, an' them that suffered for—for—their counthry. Now here' the kind o' man I'd recommend you for a husband; don't let a pair o' red cheeks or black eyes lead you by the nose—an' what signifies a good figure, when neither the handsomest nor the strongest man can keep off a headache or a fit o' the blackguard cholic—bad luck to it—when they come on one. No, Miss Julia, always in the man that's to be your husband, prefer good lastin' color in the complection, an' little matther about the color of the eyes if they always smile upon yourself—then agin, never marry a man that swears, Miss Julia, but a man that's fond of his prayers, and is given to piety—sich men never use any but harmless oaths, sich as may I be blest, salvation to me, and the like—that's the kind o' men to make a husband of, and I have sich a man in my eye for you."

"Thank you, Mogue," said Julia, who was too quick-witted to misunderstand him any longer. "Many thanks for your good advice—and whisper, Mogue—who knows but I may follow it? Good-night!"

"Good-night, darlin'," he whispered in a kind of low triumphant cackle, that caused her to shake her very sides with laughter, after she had closed the window.

Julia Purcel, who could attribute Moylan's extraordinary conversation to nothing but a more than usual indulgence in liquor, did not for a single moment suffer herself to become influenced by the unaccountable information which she had heard respecting M'Carthy. But even if it had been true, she was so peculiarly circumstanced, that without disclosing the private conversation she had had with Moylan, she could not without pain communicate it to her family. As it was, however, she placed no confidence whatever in any portion of it, and on further reflection, she felt all her apprehensions concerning M'Carthy revived. If she experienced anything in the shape of satisfaction from the dialogue, it arose from the fact that if M'Carthy had suffered injury, Mogue would not have been so much at ease on his return. When his return was made known, however, to the family at large, Mogue repeated his first version, and assured them that he, M'Carthy had laid down in Finnerty's for an hour or so to recruit his strength. He supposed he would soon be home, he said—or for that matter, maybe as he found himself comfortable, he would stop there for the night. Mogue himself had come home to make their minds easy, and to let them know where he was, and what had kept him away.

To a certain extent the family were satisfied, but as M'Carthy had communicated to the male portion of them the friendly warning he had got from the Whiteboy, they said, that although he might have been safe enough when Mogue left him in the mountains, yet considering the state of the country, and that he unquestionably had enemies, he might not be free from danger on his way home. There was scarcely a night in the week that

the country was not traversed by multitudes of those excited and unscrupulous mobs, that struck terror to the hearts of the peaceful, or such as were obnoxious to them. Accordingly, after waiting a couple of hours, Alick Purcel got a double case of pistols, and proposed to go as far as O'Driscol's, where they took it for granted, as he had not been able to come to dinner, they would find him should he have returned.

"Alick," said the father, "after all the notices we have got, and considering the feeling that is against us, it is ridiculous to be fool-hardy—don't go by the road but cross the fields."

"Such is my intention, sir," replied Alick; "for although no coward, still I am but flesh and blood, and it is death you know, for mere flesh and blood to stop a bullet. Give me my enemy face to face and I don't fear him, but when he takes me at night from behind a hedge, courage is of little use, and won't save my life."

On arriving at O'Driscol's, he found that M'Carthy had not come, and after waiting till one o'clock, he prepared to take his departure. At this moment, a female servant tapped at the drawing-room door, and after having been desired to come in, she communicated the following startling particulars:—She had forgotten her washing, she said, and gone out a little time before to bring it in, and in doing so, she spied several men with black faces and white shirts skulking about the house. She was not sure, she said, on having the question put to her, whether she had been seen by them or not.

This communication, which was given with every mark of alarm and terror, completely altered the posture of affairs at the magistrate's. Katherine O'Driscol's face became deadly pale as she turned a glance upon young Purcel, which he well understood. "Alick," said she, "under these circumstances, it would be absolute madness to attempt going home to-night. It is very likely they have discovered that you are here, and are watching for you."

"But if I do not return home," he replied, "it is equally probable that John and my father, wondering at my delay, may come to look for me, and in that case they might meet these ruffians—or rather might be waylaid by them."

"Purcel, my dear fellow!". said the magistrate, who was now pretty deep in his cups, and consequently somewhat pot-valiant—or at least disposed to show them a touch of his valor—"Alick, my dear fellow, you are courageous enough, I admit, but at the same time, you must put yourself under the guidance of a brave and loyal old magistrate, who is not to be cowed and intimidated by a crew of midnight cut-throats.. You'll see now, Alick, my boy, what a touch of loyal courage can do. Upon my honor, and conscience, I will myself escort you home."

"By no means, sir," replied Purcel, "I could not think of putting you to such a risk and inconvenience at this late hour."

"But I say by all manes, Alick—and as for inconvanience, it is none at all."

"But Mr. Purcel will expose neither himself nor you, my dear father," said Katherine; "he will be guided by good sense, and remain here to-night."

"Tut! you foolish cowardly girl, go to bed—you play loo very well, and have won seven-and-sixpence from me to-night. That's your province. No, upon my sowl and honor, I'll see him home. What! is it for the intelligent and determined O'Driscol, as your brother John said—and who is well known to be a very divil incarnate when danger's before him—is it for such a man—the terror of evil-doers—to funk from a crew of Whiteboys! What would my friend the Castle say if it knew it?—divil resave the line ever it would correspond with me again. Get me my pistols, I say—a case for each pocket, and the blunderbush under my arm—then come on, M'Donough, as the play says, and blazes to him who runs last." Here he gave a lurch a little to the one side, after which he placed himself in something intended for a military attitude, and drawing his hand down his whiskers, he inflated himself as if about to give the word of command, "Soldiers, steady,"—here he gave another lurch—"recover omes (arms)—charge bayonets—present—halt—to the right about—double quick—bravo—you see what I could do, if placed in a military position."

"We do, sir," said Fergus, laughing; "not a doubt of it." The latter then whispered something to Purcel, who smiled, and immediately turning to the doughty magistrate, said:—

"Well, sir, since you insist upon protecting me home——"

"Good—that's the word, Alick—steady boys—shoulder omes."

"I will feel very happy, sir, in your escort."

"Yes, Alick—yes—exactly so—but then we are time enough, man—the night's but young yet—we must have another tumbler before we go—if it is only to put terror into these villains."

"I am exceedingly sorry that it is out of my power to wait, sir. My father and John may possibly come over here, and if they do it is difficult to say what these blood-thirsty villains, who care so little about human life—especially, sir, when that life belongs to

either a tithe-proctor or a magistrate, may do. You will oblige me very much, sir, by coming with me now. I wish to heavens I had your courage, Mr. O'Driscol, and that I was such a wicked and desperate dare-devil as you are."

"Good, Alick, upon my honor and conscience, you've hit me off there—hallo—what is this?—put these pistols and that blunderbush aside, and be d——d to you, we don't want them yet awhile;" this was addressed to the servant who had brought them at Fergus's suggestion. "I am a hospitable man, Alick—a convivial man—and I tell you that I don't wish a guest to leave my house with dry lips—and what is more, I won't allow it—sit down then, and take your punch, or if you're afraid of these fellows why didn't you say so?"

"I am then, sir," replied Alick, who thought that by admitting the fact, he might the sooner bring matters between himself and the magistrate to a crisis.

"What!" exclaimed the latter, "you admit your cowardice, do you?—Well, upon my honor and reputaytion, Alick, I'm extremely surprised at you—a young fellow like you—and a coward! Now I'll tell you what, Alick, I hate a coward—I despise a coward, and d——n me if any man who is mane enough to acknowledge himself to be one, shall have the benefit of my escort this night. Then stay where you are, sir, and take your punch—but you are not entitled to any protection; no, confound me if you are! A nice office for a man of my mettle to escort a coward!—no, no—take your punch, I say—you are safe under this roof, but as touching my protection, no fellow of your kidney shall resave it from me, unless in honest open daylight with a body of police or military at my elbow; and, besides, you have declined my hospitality, Mr. Purcel, and with the man—but man you are not—who declines my hospitality, I will keep no terms. Here's the 'Castle!' long life to it, and may it never have occasion to read me a lecture for protecting a coward! Steady, men—shoulder omes!—ah, I'm a pearl before swine here—upon my honor and conscience, I'm nothing else—hurra!"

Whilst this manifestation of courage and loyalty was proceeding, his daughter had sent a little girl by a lonely and circuitous way across the fields to Longshot Lodge, with a message to the effect that they had prevailed upon Alick to stop for the night, and that he would also breakfast there the next morning. The little girl's absence was very brief, and on her return, Alick had no hesitation in remaining. The heroic magistrate, having taken another tumbler, began to get drowsy, and with some assistance, was prevailed on to go to bed, where he almost immediately fell asleep. The two young men then got together all the arms and ammunition in the house, which, having made ready for an attack, they went also to bed, taking only their coats off, where for the present we leave them—but not asleep—and return to M'Carthy, for whose absence, no doubt, the reader is anxious that we should account.

CHAPTER XII.

Out of the Frying-Pan into the Fire.

M'Carthy on that night had not gone far, after having separated from the friendly Whiteboy, when he was met by a powerfully-formed man, who, he thought, bore a considerable resemblance in shape and size to the fellow who had been invested with authority not long before in Finnerty's. On seeing that it was M'Carthy, the stranger, whose face was blackened, and who also wore the white shirt outside, approached him coolly but determinedly, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, said—"Your name is Francis M'Carthy?" and as he spoke, M'Carthy could perceive the ends of a case of pistols projecting from his breast within the shirt, which was open at the neck.

"As I have never knowingly done anything that should occasion me to deny my name, I acknowledge it—you know me, of course."

"I know you well. I meek it a point to know everyone who is worth knowing. In the meantime, M'Carthy, you'll come along with me, if you pleese."

"It is not at all clear that I will," replied M'Carthy; "you are a perfect stranger to me—at least your disguise makes you so. You are out on illegal business, as is evident from that disguise, and you are armed with a case of pistols. Now, under these circumstances, happen what may, until I know more about you, and who you are, I will not walk one inch in your society, except as a free agent."

"Hear me," replied the other; "you were singled out for murdher this night, and you only escaped by a miracle—by the assistance of a man who is a warm friend to you, and who got information of the danger you wor in from another friend who suspected that you were in that danger. Two pistols wor loaded to *settle* you, as they say. Well, the person that saved your life damped the powder in these pistols—both wor snapped at you, and they didn't go off—am I right?"

"You are right for so far, certainly."

"Well, then, the other two who followed you—one of them with a long, sharp dogger—were shot down—d—n your friend that didn't send the bullets through their brains instead of their hams and limbs; however, they fell and you escaped—am I right?"

"Perfectly correct," replied M'Carthy; "and you must have had your information only from the person who befriended me."

"Well, then, have you any objection to come with me now?"

"Every objection; I wish to go either to Mr. O'Driscol's or Mr. Purcel's."

"Listen. I say if you attempt this night to go to either one house or the other, you will never carry your life to them. If I was your enemy, and wished to put a bullet into you, what is there to prevent me now, I ask you?"

"Ah, my good friend," replied M'Carthy, "that argument won't pass with me. Many a man there is—and I dare say you know it well—who feels a strong scruple against committing murder with his own hands, who, notwithstanding, will not scruple to employ others to commit it for him."

"Do you refuse to come with me, then? because if you do to-morrow mornin' will rise upon your corpse. Even I couldn't save you if you were known. There's a desperate and a dreadful game goin' to be played soon, and as you stand in the way of a man that possesses great power, and has a perticular end in view—the consequence is that you are doomed. Even if you do come with me, I must blacken your face, in ordher to prevint you from being known."

"Will you answer me one question candidly," said M'Carthy—"if it's a fair one? Did I see you to-night before?"

"Ask me no question," replied the man; "for I won't answer any I don't like, and that happens to be one o' them. Whether you saw me this night before, or whether you didn't, there is no occasion for me to say so, and I won't say it."

"I think I know him now," said M'Carthy; "and if I judge correctly, he is anything but a safe guide."

"Come," said the hugh Whiteboy, 'make up your mind; I won't weet another minute."

M'Carthy paused and deliberately reconsidered as coolly as possible all the circumstances of the night. It was obvious that this man must have had his information with respect to the recent events from his friendly preserver—a man who would not be likely to betray him into danger after having actually saved his life, by running the risk of committing two murders. On the other hand it was almost clear, from the manner in which the person before him pronounced certain words, as well as from his figure, that he was the celebrated and mysterious Buck English of whose means of living every one was ignorant, and who, as he himself had heard, expressed a strong dislike to him.

"Before I make up my mind," said M'Carthy, "may I ask another question?"

"Fifty if you like, but I won't promise to answer any one o' them."

"Was I brought to Finnerty's house with an evil purpose?"

"No: the poor, pious fool that brought you there—but I'm wrong in sayin' so—for it was the mist that done it. No, the poor fool that came there with you is a crature that nobody would trust. He thinks you're lyin' sound asleep in Finnerty's this minute. He's fit for nothing but prayin' and thinking the girls in love with him."

"Well," replied M'Carthy, "at all events you are a brother Irishman, and I *will* put confidence in you; come, I am ready to accompany you."

"In that case, then, you must sufter me to blacken your face, and for fear your shootin' jacket might betray you, I'll put this shirt over it."

He then pulled out an old piece of crumpled paper that contained a mixture of lampblack and grease, with which he besmeared his whole face, from his neck to the roots of his hair, after which he stripped the shirt he wore outside his clothes, and in about two or three minutes completely metamorphosed our friend M'Carthy into a thorough-looking Whiteboy.

"Come along now," said he, "and follow me; but even as it is, and in spite of your disguise, we must take the lonesomest way to the only place I think you'll be safe in."

"I am altogether in your hands," replied M'Carthy, "and shall act as you wish."

They then proceeded across the country for about two miles, keeping up towards the mountainous district, after which they made a turn and entered a deep valley, in whose lowest extremity stood a long, low house.

"Now," said the stranger, "before we go in here, remember what I'm goin' to say to you. If any one—I mean a Whiteboy,"—here M'Carthy started, struck by the peculiarity of the pronunciation—a circumstance which by no means strengthened his sense of security—"if any of them should come across you and ask you for the pass, here it is. *What's the hour?* Answer—*Very near the right one. Isn't it come yet?* Answer—*The hour is come, but not the man. When will he come?* Answer—*He is within sight.*"

He repeated these words three or four

times, after which he and M'Carthy entered the house.

"God save all here!" said the guide.

"God save you kindly, boys."

"Mrs. Cassidy," he continued, "here's a poor fellow on his keepin' for tithe business; and although you don't know me, I know you well enough to be sartin that you'll give this daicent boy a toss in a bed till daybreak—an' a mouthful to ate if he should want it."

"Troth an' I will, sir; isn't one o' my poor boys in Lisnagola goal for the same tithes—bad luck to them—that is for batin' one o' the vagabonds that came to collect them. Troth he'll have the best bed in my house."

"And listen, Mrs. Cassidy; if any of *us* should happen to come here to-night—although I don't think it's likely they will, still it's hard to say, for the country's alive with with them—if any of them should come here, don't let them know that this poor boy is in the house—do you mind?"

"Ah, then, it would be a bad day or night either I wouldn't."

"Will you have anything to ate or dhrink," asked the guide of M'Carthy.

"Nothing," replied the other; "I only wish to get to bed."

"Come, then," said the colossal Whiteboy, "I'll show you where you're to lie."

They accordingly left the kitchen, passed through a tolerably large room, with two or three tables and several chairs in it, and entered another, which was also of a good size. Here there was a bed, and in this M'Carthy was to rest—if rest he could under a series of circumstances so extraordinary and exciting.

"Now," said his guide, for such we must call him—"observe this," and he brought him to a low window which opened at the back of the house, "press that spot where you see the frame is sunk a little—you can feel it, too, aisily enough in the dark—very well, press that with your thumb and the windy will open by being pushed outwards. If you feel or find that there's any danger you can slip out of it; however, don't be alarmed bekase you may hear voices. There's only *one set* that you may be afraid of—they're on the look-out for yourself—but I don't think it's likely they'll come here. If they do, however, and that you hear them talkin' about you, there's your way to get off. Come, now, I must try you again before I go. What's the hour?"

"Very near the right one."

"Isn't it come yet?"

"The hour is come but not the man."

"When will he come?"

"He is within sight."

"Now, good-bye, you may take a good sleep but don't strip; lie just as you are—that's twiste your life has been saved this night. In the mane time, you must give me back that overall shirt—*your* danger I hope is past, but *I* may want it to-night yet; and stay, I was near spoilin' all—I forgot to give you the right grip—here it is—if any of them shakes hands wid you, mark this—he presses the point of his thumb on the first joint of your fore-finger, and you press yours upon the middle joint of his little finger, this way—you won't forget that now?"

"Certainly not," replied M'Carthy, "I will remember it accurately."

"Very well," he proceeded, "take my advice, get to Dublin without delay—if you remain here you're a dead man; you may never see me again, so God bless you!" and with these words he left him.

It is difficult to describe M'Carthy's state of mind on finding himself alone. The events of the night, fearful as they were, joined to his singular and to him unaccountable escape—his present state of uncertainty and the contingent danger that awaited him—the fact that parties were in search of him for the purpose of taking away his life, whilst he himself remained utterly unconscious of the cause which occasioned such a bitter and unrelenting enmity against him—all these reflections, coming together upon a mind already distracted and stupefied by want of rest, and excessive weariness—succeeded in inducing first a wild sense of confusion—then forgetfulness of his position, and ultimately sound and dreamless sleep. How long that sleep had continued he could not even guess, but be that as it may, on awaking, he heard a medley of several voices in the next room, all engaged in an earnest conversation, as was evident, not merely from the disjointed manner of their pronunciation but a strong smell of liquor which assailed his nose. His first impulse was to arise and escape by the window, but on reflection, as he saw by the light of their candle that the door between the two apartments was open, he deemed it safer to keep quiet for a little, with a hope that they might soon take their departure. He felt anxious, besides, to ascertain whether the party in question consisted of those whom the strange guide had mentioned as being his enemies. In the meantime, the following agreeable dialogue greeted his ears and banished for the moment every other thought and consideration.

"It was altogether a bad business this night. He was as well set as man could be, but hell pursue the pistols, they both missed fire; and thim that did go off hot the wrong men. The same two—we can't name names,

boys, won't be the betther of it for some time. We met them, you see, in the mountains, where we wor goin' on a little business. Here's that we may never ait worse mait than mutton!"

"More power, Dick—Dick, (hiccup) you're a trojan, an' so was your father and mother afore you; here's your to—toast, Dick, that we may ever an' always ait no worse mait than—praties an' point, hurra!—that's the chat, ha!—ha!—ha!—ah, begad it's we that's the well-fed boys—ay, but sure our friends the poor parsons has been always starvin' in the counthry."

"Always starvin' the counthry!" exclaimed another, playing upon the word, "be my sowl you're right there, Ned. Well sure they're gettin' a touch of it now themselves; by japers, some o' them knows what it is to have the back and belly brought together, or to go hungry to bed, as the sayin' is; but go on, Dick, an' tell us how it was."

"Why, you see, we went back when we heard that the house was to be attacked, and only he escaped the way he did, it wouldn't be attacked; howaniver, you know it's wid O'Driscol—a short cooser to him, too, and he'll get it—it's wid O'Driscol he stops. So off we went, and waited in Barney Broghan's still-house, where we had a trifle to dhrink."

"Divil resave the bet—bettherer spirits ever came from—a still—il eye, nor darlent Bar—ar—ney Brogh—aghan makes—whisht!—more power!—won't the counthry soon—be our—our—own—whips!"

"Ned, hould your tongue, an' let him go 'an; well, Dick."

"Afther waitin' in the still-house till what we thought was the proper time, we went to O'Driscol's, and first struv to get in quietly, but you see we had no friends in the camp, for the men-servants all sleep in the outhouses, barrin' the butler; an' he's not the thing for Ireland. Well and good, although among ourselves, it was anything but well and good this night; however, we demanded admittance, an' jist as if they had been on the watch for us—a windy was raised, and a voice called out to us to know what we wanted.

"'Neither to hurt or harm any one in the house,' we said, 'or belongin' to it; but there is a stranger in it that we must have out.'

"'Ay,' said another voice, that several of us knew to be Mr. Alick Purcel's; 'here I am—you scoundrels, but that's your share of me. If you don't begone instantly,' says he, swearin' an oath, 'we'll shoot you like dogs where you stand.'

"'We know you, Mr. Purcel,' says we, 'but it isn't you we want to-night—your turn's to come yet; time about is fair play. It's M'Carthy we want.'

"'You must want him, then,' says young O'Driscol, 'for he's not here; and even if he was, you should fight for him before you'd get him—but what might your business be wid him?' he asked. 'Why,' says we, "there's a man among us that has an account to settle wid him.'

"'Ah, you cowardly scoundrels,' says he, 'that's a disgrace to the counthry, and to the very name of Irishman; it's no wondher for strangers to talk of you as they do—no wondher for your friends to have a shamed face for your disgraceful crimes. You would now take an inoffensive gintleman—one that never harmed a man of you, nor any one else—you'd take him out, bekáise some blackhearted cowardly villain among you has a pick (pique) against him, and some of you for half-a-crown or a bellyful of whisky would murdher him in could blood. Begone, or by the livin' Farmer, I'll scatter the contents of this blunderbush among you.' *He* that wishes to have M'Carthy done for was wid us himself, and tould us in Irish to fire at the windy, which we did, and on the instant slop came a shower of bullets among us. A boy from the Esker got one of them through the brain, and fell stone dead; two others—we can't mention names—was wounded, and it was well we got them off safe. So there's our night's work for us. Howaniver, the day's comin' when we'll pay them for all."

"I think, boys," said a person, whose voice was evidently that of a man advanced in years, "I think you ought to give this procthor Purcel a cardin'. He lifts the tithes of four parishes, and so far he's a scourge over four parishes; himself and his blasted citations to the bishop's court and his blasted decrees—hell purshue him, as it will. Ah, the Carders wor fine fellows, so were the Sextons."

"Bravo, Billy Bradly, conshumin' to me but I'm—I'm main proud, and that we met you com—omin' from the wake to-night; I am, upon my sow—owl."

"I believe, Billy," said another voice, "you had your own fun wid procthors in your day."

"Before the union—hell bellows it for a union—but it has been a black sight to the counthry! Amin this night—before the union, it's we that did handle the procthors in style; it isn't a cowardly threatenin' notice we'd send them, and end there. No—but I'll tell you what we done one night, in them days. There was a man, a procthor, an' he was a Catholic too, for I needn't tell you, boys, that there never was a Protestant procthor half as hard and cruel as one of our own

ralligion, an' that's well known. Well, there was this procthor I'm talkin' of, his name was Callaghan; he was a dark-haired ill-lookin' fellow, with a squint and a stutther; but for all that, he had a daicent, quiet, well-behaved family that offended nobody—not like our proud horsewhippin' neighbors; an', indeed, his daughters did not mount their side-saddles like some of the same neighbors, but sure we all know the ould proverb, set a beggar on horseback, and we needn't tell you where he'll ride to. Well, I'm forgettin' my story in the mane time. At that time, a party of about sixty of us made up our minds to pay Callaghan a nightly visit. The man, you see, made no distinction betune the rich and poor, or rather he made every distinction, for he was all bows and scrapes to the rich, and all whip and fagot to the poor. Ah, he was a sore blisther to that part of the counthry he lived in, and many a widow's an' orphan's curse he had. At any rate, to make a long story short, we went a set of us, a few nights afore we called upon him—that is, in a friendly way, for we had no intention of takin' his life, but merely to tickle him into good humor a bit, and to make him have a little feelin' for the poor, that he many a time tickled an' got tickled by the sogar's bagnet to some purpose; we went, I say, to a lonely place, and we dug sich a grave as we thought might fit him, and havin' buttoned and lined it well with thorns, we then left it covered over with scraws for fraid anybody might find it out. So far so good. At last the appointed night came, and we called upon him.

"'Is Mr. Callaghan in?' said one of us, knockin' at the door.

"'What's your business wid him?' said a servant girl, as she opened the door.

"'Tis to pay some tithe I want,' says the man; and no sooner was the word out of his mouth than in we boulted betther than a score of us; for the rest all stayed about the place to act accordin' to circumstances.

"'How do you do, Misther Callaghan?' says our captain, 'I hope you're well, sir,' says he, 'and in good health."

"'I can't say I am, sir," said Callaghan, 'I haven't been to say at all well for the last few days, wid a pain down my back.'

"'Ah, indeed no wondher, Mr. Callaghan,' says the other; 'that's the curse of the widows and orphans, and the poor in general, that you have oppressed in ordher to keep up a fat an' greedy establishment,' says he, 'but in the mane time, keep a good heart—we're friends of yours, and wishes you well; and if the curses have come down hot and heavy on your back, we'll take them off it,' says he, 'so aisily and purtily, that if you'll only shut your eyes, you'll think yourself in another world—I mane of coorse the world you'll go to,' says he;—'we have got a few nice and aisy machines here, for ticklin' sich procthors, in ordher to laugh them into health again, and we'll now set you to rights at wanst. Comes, boys,' says he, turnin' to us, 'tie every sowl in the house, barrin' the poor sick procthor that we all feel for, bekaise you see, Misther Callaghan, in ordher to do the thing complate, we intind to have your own family spectawthers of the cure.'

"'No,' said one of them, a detarmined man he was, 'that wasn't in our agreement, nor it isn't in our hearts, to trate the innocent like the guilty."

"'It must be done,' said the captain.

"No,' said the other back to him, 'the first man that mislists a hair of one of his family's heads, I'll put the contents of this through him—if this onmanly act had been mentioned before, you'd a' had few here tonight along wid you.'

"Well, sure enough, the most of us was wid the last speaker, so, instead of cardin' the sick procthor before his own family, we tied and gagged him so as that he neither spoke nor budged, and afther clappin' a guard upon the family for an hour or two, we put him on horseback and brought him up to where the grave was made. We then stripped him, and layin' him across a ditch, we got the implements, or the feadhers as we call them, to tickle him. Well, now, could you guess, boys, what these feadhers was? I'll go bail you couldn't, so I may as well tell you at wanst; divil resave the thing else, but half-a-dozen of the biggest tom-cats we could get, and this is the way we used them. Two or three of us pitched our hands well and the tails of the cats into the bargain, we then, as I said, laid the naked procthor across a ditch, and began to draw the tom-cats down the flesh of his back. God! how the unfortunate divil quivered and writhed and turned—until the poor wake crature, that at first had hardly the strength of a child, got, by the torture he suffered, the strength of three men; for indeed, afther he broke the cords that tied him, three, nor three more the back o' that, wasn't sufficient to hould him. He got the gag out of his mouth, too, and then, I declare to my Saviour his scrames was so awful that we got frightened, for we couldn't but think that the voice was unnatural, an' sich as no man ever heard. We set to, however, and gagged and tied him agin, and then we carded him—first down, then up, then across by one side, and after that across by the other. Well, when this was done, we tuk him as aisily an' as purtily as we could."

"D——n your soul, you ould ras—ras—

cal," said the person they called Ned, "you wor—wor all a parcel o' bloody, d——n, hell-fi—fi—fire, cowardly villains, to—to—thrat—ate any fellow crature—crature in sich a way. Why didn't you shoo—shoo—oot him at wanst, an' not put—ut him through hell's tor—tortures like that, you bloody-minded ould dog!"

To tell the truth, many of them were shocked at the old carder's narrative, but he only grinned at them, and replied—

"Ay, shoot—you may talk about shootin,' Ned, avick, but for all that life's sweet."

"Get ou—out, you ould sinner o' perdition—to blazes wid you; life's sweet you ould *shandina*—what a purty—urty way you tuk of sweetenin' it for him. I tell—ell you, Bil—lilly Bradly, that you'll never die on your bed for that night's wo—ork."

"And even if I don't, Ned, you won't have my account to answer for."

"An' mighty glad I am of it: my own—own's bad enough, God knows, an' for the mat—matther o' that—here's God pardon us all, barrin' that ould cardin' sinner—amin, acheerna villish, this night! Boys, I'll sing yes a song."

"Aisy, Ned," said one or two of them, "bad as it was, let us hear Billy Bradly's story out."

"Well, proceeded Billy, "when the ticklin' was over, we took the scraws off of the grave, lined wid thorns as it was, and laid the procthor, naked and bleedin'—scarified into griskins—"

"Let me at—at him, the ould cardin' mur—urdherer; plain murdher's daicency compared to that. Don't hould me, Dick; if I was sworn ten times over, I'll bate the divil's taptoo on his ould carkage."

"Be aisy, Ned—be aisy now, don't disturb the company—sure you wouldn't *rise* your hand to an ould man like Billy Bradly. Be quiet."

—"Scarified into griskins as he was," proceeded Bradly looking at Ned with a grin of contempt—"ay, indeed, snug and cosily we laid him in his bed of feadhers, and covered him wid thin scraws for fear he'd catch could—he! he! he! That's the way we treated the procthors in our day. I think I desarve a drink now!"

Drinking was now resumed with more vigor, and the proceedings of the night were once more discussed.

"It was a badly-managed business every way," said one of them, "especially to let M'Carthy escape; however, we'll see him again, and if we can jist lay our eyes upon him in some quiet place, it'll be enough;—what's to be done wid this body till mornin.' It can't be lyin' upon the chairs here all night."

M'Carthy, we need scarcely assure our readers, did not suffer all this time to pass without making an effort to escape. This, however, was a matter of dreadful danger, as the circumstances of the case stood. In the first place, as we have already said, the door between the room in which he lay and that in which the Whiteboys sat, was open, and the light of the candles shone so strongly into it, that it was next to an impossibility for him to cross over to the window without being seen; in the second place, the joints of the beds were so loose and rickety that, on the slightest motion of its occupant, it creaked and shrieked so loud, that any attempt to rise off it must necessarily have discovered him.

"We must do something with the body of this unlucky boy," continued the speaker; "divil resave you, M'Carthy, it was on your account he came to this fate; blessed man, if we could only catch him!"

"Here, Dick, you and Jemmy there, and Art, come and let us bring him into the bed in the next room—it's a fitter and more properer place for him than lyin' upon chairs here. God be merciful to you, poor Lanty, it's little you expected this when you came out to-night! Take up the candles two more of you, and go before us: here—steady now; mother of heaven, how stiff and heavy he has got in so short a time—and his family! what will they say? Hell resave you, M'Carthy, I say agin! I'm but a poor man, and I wouldn't begrudge a five-pound note to get widin shot of you, wherever you are."

It would be idle to attempt anything like a description of M'Carthy's feelings upon such an occasion as this. It is sufficient to say, that he almost gave himself up for lost, and began to believe, for the first time in his life, that there is such a thing as fate. Here had his life been already saved once to-night, but scarcely had he escaped when he is met by a person evidently disguised, but by whose language he is all but made certain that he is a man full of mystery, and who besides has expressed strong enmity against him. This person, with a case of pistols in his breast, compels him, as it were, to put himself under his protection; and he conducts him into a remote isolated shebeen-house, where, no doubt, there is a meeting of Whiteboys every night in the week. The M'Carthy spirit is, proverbially, brave and intrepid, but we are bound to say, that notwithstanding its hereditary intrepidity, our young friend would have given the wealth of Europe to have found himself at that moment one single mile away from the bed on which he lay. His best policy was

now to affect sleep, and he did so with an apparent reality borrowed from desperation.

"Hallo!" exclaimed those who bore the candle, on looking at the bed, "who the devil and Jack Robinson have we got here? Aisy, boys—here's some blessed clip or other fast asleep: lay down poor Lanty on the ground till we see who this. Call Molly Cassidy; here, Molly, who the dickens is this chap asleep?"

Molly immediately made her appearance.

"Troth I dunna who he is," she replied; "he's some poor boy on his keepin', about tithes, that *He* brought here to-night."

"That's a cursed lie, Molly; wid' many respects to you, *He* couldn't a' been here to-night."

"Thank you, sir, whoever you are; but I tell you it's no lie; and he was here, and left that boy wid me, desirin' me to let him come to no injury, for that—" and this was an addition of her own, "there was hundreds offered for the takin' of him."

"Why, what did he do, did you hear?"

"*He* whispered to me," she replied, in a low voice, but loud enough for M'Carthy to hear, "that he shot a tithe-proctor."

"We'll see what he's made of, though," said one of them; "and, at all events, we'd act very shabbily if we didn't give him a share af what's goin'; but aisy, boys," he added, "take care—ay! aisy, I say, safe's the word; who knows but he's a spy in disguise, and, in that case, we'll have a different card to play. Hallo! neighbor," he exclaimed, giving M'Carthy a shove, who started up and looked about him with admirable tact.

"What—what—eh—what's this? who are you all? what are you about?" he asked, and as he spoke, he sprung to his feet. "What's this?" he exclaimed again. "Sweet Jasus! is this Fagan the tithe-proctor that I shot? eh—or are you—stay—no—ah, no—not the polis. Oh, Lord, but I'm relieved; I thought you were polis, but I see by your faces that I'm safe, at laste I hope so."

"Ay, to be sure, you're safe—safe—as—as the bank (hiccup). You're a gintlemen, si—ryou're a Con Roe—the ace o' hearts you are. Ay, you shot—like a ma—an, and didn't card—ard him wid tomcats, and then put the poo—oo—oor (hiccup) devil into a grave lined wid thorns; ah, you cowardly ould villain! the devil, in the shape of a to—to—tom-cat will card you in hell yet; an' moreover, you'll ne—never—ever die in your bed, you hard-hearted ould scut o' blazes; an' that you may not, I pray Ja—sa—sus this night—an' God forgive us all—amin, acheerna!"

"Hould your drunken tongue, Ned," said he who seemed to assume authority over them; "we want to put this poor boy, who died of liquor to-night, into the bed, and I suppose you'll have no objection."

"None at all at all," replied M'Carthy, assuming the brogue, at which, fortunately for himself, he was an adept; "it's a good man's case, boys; blood an' turf, give him a warm birth of it—he'll find it snug and comfortable."

They then placed the corpse on the bed; but changing their mind, they raised him for a moment, putting him under the bed-clothes, pinned a stocking about his head to give him a domestic look; after which they returned to the tap-room of the shebeen-house, for such in fact it was. The latter change in the position of the corpse was made from an apprehension lest the police might come in search of the body, and with the hope that he might pass for a person asleep.

"You'll drink something wid us," said the principal among them; "but, before you do, I suppose you are as you ought to be."

M'Carthy, who really was in a frightful state of thirst, determined at once to put on the reckless manner of a wild and impetuous Irishman, who set all law and established institutions at defiance.

"You suppose I am as I ought to be," he exclaimed, with a look of contempt; "why, thin, I suppose so too: in the mane time, an' before you bother me wid more gosther, I'd thank you to give me a drink o' whisky and wather—for, to tell you the truth, blast me but I think there's a confligration on a small scale goin' an inwardly; hurry, boys, or I'll split. Ah, boys, if you but knew what I wint through the last three days an' three nights."

"And what did you go through it all for?" asked the principal of them, with something of distrust in his manner.

"What did I go through it fwhor? fwhy, thin, fwhor the sake o' the trewth—I'm a Gaaulway man, boys, and it isn't in Cannaught you'll fwhind the man that's afeard to do fwhat's right: here's aaul your healths, and that everything may soon be as it ought to be."

"Well," said the other, "you are a Cannaught man sartainly, that's clear from your tongue; but I want to axe you a question."

"Fwhy nat? it's but fair,—it's but fair, I say,—take that wit you, an' I'm the boy that will answer it, if I can, bekaise you know, or maybe you don't—but it's a proverb we have in Cannaught wit us—that a fool may ax a question that a wise man couldn't answer: well, what is it?"

"Who brought you here to-night?"

"Who brought me here to-night? fwhy,

SHE FELT STARTLED FOR A MOMENT BY THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON WHO SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN SOME OF THOSE NIGHTLY OUTRAGES THAT WERE THEN SO NUMEROUS IN THE COUNTRY.—*Tithe Proctor*, p. 445.

thin, I'll tell you as much of it as I like—*He* did."

"Be japers it's a lie, beggin' your pardon, my worthy Cannaught man. He couldn't be here to-night. I know where he was the greater part of the night, and the thing's impossible. I don't know you, but we must know you—ay, and we will know you."

"Trath an' I must know you, thin, and that very soon," replied M'Carthy.

"Come into the next room, then," said the other.

"Anywhere you like," he replied, "I'm wit you; but I'm not the boy to be humbugged, or to bear your thricks upon thravellers."

"Now," said the other, when they had got into the room where the corpse lay, "shake hands."

They accordingly shook hands, and M'Carthy gave him the genuine grip, as he had been taught it by the Whiteboy.

"Right," said the man, "for so far; now, what's the hour?"

"Very near the right one."

"Isn't it come yet?"

"The hour is come, but not the man."

"When will he come?"

"He is within sight."

"It's all right; come in and take another dhrink," said the man; "but still, who brought you here? for I know *He* couldn't."

M'Carthy replied, winking towards the kitchen, "Troth *she'll* tell you *that* story; give me another drink o' fwhiskey and water. Oh, I'm hardly able to sit up, I'm gettin' so drowsy. A wink o' sleep, I may say, didn't crass my eye these three nights; an' I'd wish to stretch myself beside the poor boy widin. I'm an my keepin', boys, and fwhin you know that the law was at my heels fwhor the last foive weeks, you'll allow I want rest: throth I must throw myself somewhere."

"Go in, then, poor fellow, and lie down," said the same individual, who acted as spokesman; "we know how you must feel, wid the hell-hounds of the law afther you: here, Jack, hould the candle for him, and help him to move over poor Lanty to make room for him; and Mrs. Cassidy," he called in a louder voice, "bring us another bottle."

"Faith, to tell you the truth," replied Jack, "I'd rather not; I don't like to go near a dead body."

"Here," said the person called Dick, "give me the candle: poor fellow! it *is* rest you want, and God forbid we wouldn't do everything in our power for you."

They then entered the apartment, and M'Carthy was about to lay himself beside the corpse, when his companion tapped him significantly on the shoulder, and, putting his finger on his lips, pointed to the window, and immediately whispered in his ear—"I will leave the windy so that it will open at wanst: three of us knows you, Mr. M'Carthy. I will sing a song when I go in again, which they will chorus; fly then, for it's hard to say what might happen: the day is now breakin', and you might be known—in that case I needn't tell you what your fate would be."

He then returned to his companions, having carefully closed the door after him so as to prevent, as much as possible, the motions of M'Carthy from being seen or heard. On rejoining them he observed—"well, if ever a poor boy was fairly broken down, and he is—throth he was no sooner on the bed than he was off; an' among ourselves, the sleep must be heavy on him when he could close his eyes an' a dead man in the bed wid him."

CHAPTER XIII.

Strange Faces—Dare-Devil O'Driscol Roused.

We have already stated that the proctor's daughters had relieved their mother from the duty which that kind-hearted woman had been in the habit of imposing on herself—we mean that of attending and relieving the sick and indigent in her immediate neighborhood. On the morning in question Julia Purcel, who, together with her sister, had for some time past been attending the death-bed of an interesting young female, daughter to one of her father's workmen, had got up at an early hour to visit her—scarcely with a hope, it is true, that she would find the poor invalid alive. Much to her satisfaction, however, she found her better, and with some dawning prospects of ultimate recovery. She left with her mother the means of procuring such comforts as she considered might be suitable to her in the alternative of her convalescence, and had got more than half-way home when she felt startled for a moment by the appearance of a person who seemed to have been engaged in some of these nightly outrages that were then so numerous in the country. The person in question had just leaped from an open breach in the hedge which bounded the right-hand side of the road exactly opposite where she was passing. The stranger's appearance was certainly calculated to excite terror, especially in a female; for although he did not wear the shirt over his clothes, his face was so deeply blackened that a single shade of his complexion could not be recognized. We need

not again assure our readers that Julia Purcel possessed the characteristic firmness and courage of her family, but notwithstanding this she felt somewhat alarmed at the appearance of a lawless Whiteboy, who was at that moment most probably on his return from the perpetration of some midnight atrocity. This alarm was increased on seeing that the person in question approached her, as if with some deliberate intent.

"Stand back, sir," she exclaimed. "What can you mean by approaching me? Keep your distance."

"Why, good God! my dear Julia, what means this? Do you not know me?"

"Know *you!* No, sir," she replied, "how could I know such a person?"

She had unconsciously paused a moment when the Whiteboy, as she believed him to be, first made his appearance, but now she pursued her way home; the latter, however, accompanying her.

"Why, my dear Julia, I am thunderstruck! What can I have done thus to incur your displeasure?"

"You are rude and impertinent, sir, to address me with such unjustifiable familiarity. It is evident you know me, but I am yet to learn how I could have formed an acquaintance with a person whose blackened face indicates the nature of his last night's occupation."

The person she addressed suddenly put up his hand, and then looking at his fingers, immediately disclosed a set of exceedingly white and well-formed teeth, which disclosure was made by a grin that almost immediately quavered off into a loud and hearty laugh.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, on recovering his gravity, "it is no wonder, my dear Julia, that you should not know me. Since I went out to shoot with Mogue Moylan, yesterday morning, I have gone through many strange adventures."

"What!" she exclaimed, with evident symptoms of alarm and vexation, "Frank M'Carthy!" and, as she spoke, the remarkable conversation which she had had with Mogue Moylan, and the information he had given her with respect to M'Carthy's connection with the Whiteboys, instantly flashed upon her, accompanied now by a strong conviction of its truth.

"Explain yourself, Mr. M'Carthy," she exclaimed, in a tone of voice which indicated anything but satisfaction. "How am I to account for this unbecoming disguise, so much at variance with your habits of life and education?—perhaps I should not say your habits of life—but certainly with your education. Have you, too, been tempted to join this ferocious conspiracy which is even now convulsing the country?"

"No wonder you should ask, my dear Julia," he replied; "but really the incidents which have caused me to appear as you see me, are so strange, and yet so much in keeping with the spirit of the times, that I must defer, until a more convenient opportunity, a full account of them."

"Do so, sir," she replied quickly; "allow yourself full time to give the best possible explanation of your conduct. I probably have put the question too abruptly; but, in the meantime, you will have the goodness either to go on before me, or to fall back, as, I presume, you will grant that it is neither delicate nor becoming for me, who wear no disguise and am known, to be seen at such an hour holding conversation with a Whiteboy."

The impropriety of the thing struck him at once, and he replied, "You are right, Julia; but I perceive that something has given you offence; if it be my appearance, I tell you that I can afford you a satisfactory explanation. Proceed now—I shall remain here for a time;—whether with black face or white, I should not wish it to be supposed that we held a clandestine meeting at this hour."

She then bowed to him with more formality than she had probably ever used, and proceeded home at a quicker pace.

She had just turned an angle of the road, and got consequently out of sight, when he heard a strong, but sweet and mellow voice singing the fine old Irish song of the Cannie Soogah, or Jolly Pedlar; and, on looking behind him, he perceived that worthy person approaching him at a tolerably rapid pace. The pedlar had no sooner glanced at M'Carthy than he grasped his tremendous cudgel with greater firmness, and putting his hand into his breast, he pulled out a pistol, and with these preparations approached our friend, still continuing his song, with the same careless glee, and an utter absence of all fear.

"'I'm the rantin' cannie soogah'—

"God save you, neighbor! you forgot to wash your face this mornin'."

"That's its natural color," replied M'Carthy, willing, now that he was out of all danger, to have a banter with his well-known friend the pedlar.

"If you take my advice then," said the pedlar, "you'll paint it white—it's a safer color in daylight at any rate. I'm thinkin', now, that if you met a party of peelers on pathrole, they might give you a resate for

turnin' the same color red and white; however, *glunthoma*,* if you have any design upon the Cannie Soogah, I can only tell you that I never carry money about me, and even if I did, I have a couple o' friends here that 'ud stand by me; ay, in throth, three o' them, for I have brother to this fellow (showing the pistol) asleep in my breast here, and he doesn't like to be wakened, you persave; so whoever you are, jog on and wash your face, as I said, and that's a friend's advice to you."

"Why, Cannie Soogah, is it possible you don't know me?"

"Throth I've been just thinkin' that I heard the voice before, but when or where is more than I can tell."

"Not know your friend Francis M'Carthy?"

"Eh, Mr. Francis M'Carthy! and, Lord o' life, Mr. M'Carthy, how do you come to have a black face? Surely you wouldn't belong to this business—black business I may call it—that's goin'?"

"Well, I should hope not, Cannie; but, for all that, you see me with a black face—ha!—ha!—ha!"

"I do indeed, Mr. Frank, and, between you and me, I'm sorry to see it."

"You will not be sorry to hear, however, that my black face saved my life last night."

"Arra thin, how was that, sir, if it's a fair question?"

M'Carthy then gave him a brief, and by no means a detailed account of the danger he had passed.

"Well," said the other, "everything's clear enough when it's known; but, as it's clear that you have enemies in the neighborhood, I think the wisest thing you could do would be to lave it at wanst."

"Such, in fact, is my determination," replied M'Carthy; "no man, I believe, who is marked ought to remain in the country; that is, when he has no local duties that demand his presence in it, as I have not."

"You are right, sir; start this very day if you're wise, and don't give your enemies—since it appears that you have enemies—an opportunity of doin' you an injury; if they missed you twice, it's not likely they will a third time; but tell me, Mr. M'Carthy—hem—have you no suspicion as to who they are?"

"Not exactly; indeed I cannot say I have; the whole matter is shrouded in the deepest mystery. I am not conscious of having offended or injured any one, nor can I guess why my life should be sought after; but sought after unquestionably it is, and that with an implacable resentment that is utterly unaccountable."

"Well, then, Mr. Frank, listen:—I met about a dozen men—strangers they wor to me, although their faces weren't blackened—not more than twenty minutes ago; and one o' them said to me, 'Cannie, every one knows you, and you know every one—do you know *me?*'"

"'No,' says I; 'you have the advantage of me.'

"'Do you know any one here?' says he again.

"'Well, I can't say I do,' says I; 'you don't belong to this part of the country.'

"'If we did, Cannie,' said the spokesman, 'it isn't face to face, in the open day, we'd spake to you.'

"'An' what is it you have to say to me?' I axed; for, to tell you the truth, I was beginnin' to get unaisy someway.

"'Nothing to you; but we've been tould that you're well acquainted wid Procthor Purcel, and that you know a young man, by name M'Carthy, that stops for the present wid Mr. Magistrate O'Driscol.'

"'I do,' says myself; 'I'll not deny but I know them all well—I mane in the way o' business—for I call there often to sell my goods.'

"'Well,' said the spokesman, 'will you give that letther,' handin' me this, 'to Mr. M'Carthy?'" and as the pedlar spoke he placed the note in M'Carthy's hands. "'Do so,' says the fellow, 'as soon as you can—if possible, widout an hour's delay. It consarns himself and it consarns me—can I depend on you to do this?' I said I would; and now there's the letther—my message is delivered."

M'Carthy read as follows:—"Francis M'Carthy, as you regard the life of the man that saved yours last night, you won't breathe a syllable about seein' a young man's corpse last night in the shebeen-house, nor about anything that happened to you in it, till you hear further from me. If you're grateful, and a gintleman, you won't; but if you're a traitor, you will. Your friend, as you act in this."

"Now, Mr. Frank," said the pedlar, "as you know the danger that's about you, I say that unless you get out o' the counthry at wanst, you'll only have a hand in your own death if anything happens. You're goin' now, I suppose, to Mr. Purcel's; if you are—if it wouldn't be troublesome—jist say that the Cannie Soogah will call there in the coorse o' the mornin' for breakfast."

He then turned off by a different road; and M'Carthy proceeded at a very slow pace towards the proctor's, which lay in a right

* Hear me.

line between the house to which the Whiteboy had brought him and O'Driscol's. As he reached the back yard, by which he intended to enter, anxious to get himself washed before any of them should see him—he was met by Mogue, who after a glance or two recognized him at once by his shooting-dress.

"Why thin, good fortune to me, Misther Frank, is this you?"

"It is, Mogue; but I have no time to speak to you now. Only get me soap and a towel till I wash my face at the pump here. These are strange times, Mogue, and that was a very suspicious place of refuge to which you brought me; however, it will go hard or we shall make Mr. Frank Finnerty speak out, and to some purpose too. Get me soap and towel quick—I do not wish to be seen with this diabolical-looking face upon me."

"That I may be blest, sir, but the same face surprises me. Wisha, then, Mr. Frank, might one ax——"

"No," replied M'Carthy, "do as I have desired you—some other time you may hear it, but not now."

At this moment, Mogue, who was very circumspect in all his looks as well as in all his motions, saw by a side glance that Julia, on coming down the stairs, saw M'Carthy—a circumstance which delighted his very heart, inasmuch as he resolved to so manage it, that it might be made to confirm the hint he had already thrown out against M'Carthy—if that could be called a hint which was a broad and undisguised assertion. He accordingly watched until an opportunity presented itself of addressing her apart from listeners; and in the course of the morning, as she went to look after some favorite flowers in the garden, he met her at the gate.

"Miss Julia," said he, "I wish to spake one word to you, i' you plaise, miss."

"Well, Mogue, what is it?"

"You know what I tould you about poor Misther Frank last night; and what I want to say, miss, is, that you aren't to put any trust in it; truth, I believe I had a sup in—don't be guided by it—it was only jokin' about him I was—that I may never do an ill turn but it was—now."

"You need make no apology about it, Mogue," she replied; "I am not at all interested in the matter; but I now know that you told me truth; and as a friend and well-wisher of Mr. M'Carthy's, in common with all my family, I am sorry to find it so."

"Oh, well now, miss, what will I do at all? wisha, but that's the way wid me ever and always; when the little sup is in—and indeed it wasn't much I tuck—the truth always come out—if it was the killin' of a man, my heart always gets the betther o' me then."

"I saw him, Mogue, with his face blackened."

"Wisha, wisha, but I was a haythen to mention it at all. The truth is, I like Mr. Frank—but then again, I don't like anything like desate, or that carries two faces—only as you *did* see him, Miss Julia, if you're loyal to me and won't turn traitor on me—you've but to wait for a little, I'll be able to tell you more about the same foolish—I'd rather say foolish for the sake of settin' a Christian patthern, than wicked or traicherous—och, ay—for sure we all have our failins—howandiver as I was sayin', I'll soon be able, I think, to tell you more about him—things that will surprise you, miss, ay, and make the blood in your veins run cowld. Only I say, if you wish to hear this, and to have it as clearly proved to you as what I tould you last night, you musn't betray me."

This was spoken in such an earnest, and at the same time in so simple and candid a manner, that it was actually impossible to suspect for a moment that there was falsehood or treachery intended. Nay, his pretended effort to undeceive her as to M'Carthy's connection with the Whiteboys, was such a natural step after the drink which she supposed he had taken on the preceding night, and when cool reflection had returned to him, that she felt an indescribable curiosity—one attended with pain and terror—to hear the full extent of her lover's perfidy. Beyond all doubt, Moylan's treacherous adroitness, and the simplicity and piety under which he contrived to veil his treachery and revenge, were perfect in their way. As it was, he succeeded in banishing peace, and trust, and cheerfulness, from the heart of generous and affectionate Julia Purcel.

M'Carthy found the young men up, and after simply stating that the previous night was one of danger and adventure, he said that he wished to go to bed for a while, and that he would describe these adventures at more length after he had refreshed himself by some sleep. This, indeed, they perceived to be absolutely necessary, from his exhausted and pallid look. He accordingly went to rest—and, sooth to say, the sense of security, joined to his complete exhaustion, and the comforts of a warm good bed, gave him such a perception of luxury as he had never conceived before. In a few minutes he fell into a dreamless and unbroken trance.

Breakfast was postponed an hour on his account; for as he had extorted a promise from John Purcel, that he should either call him or have him called when the time for that meal arrived, they did not wish to dis-

turb him so soon. In the meantime, there was many a conjecture as to the cause of his absence, and as the fact of his black face could not be concealed, there was consequently many an opinion given as to the circumstances which occasioned that unexpected phenomenon. Julia did not at all appear, but pleaded indisposition, and Alick had not yet returned from O'Driscol's, so there was only the proctor, his son John, his wife, and Mary, to discuss the matter. At length, about half-past ten M'Carthy made his appearance, and after the usual civilities of the morning, he gave them a pretty clear, but not a very detailed account of the dangers he had undergone. After a good deal of consideration, he resolved, in accordance with the wish of his unknown friend, to suppress all mention of the attack upon O'Driscol's house, and of the young man who had been shot whilst it was going on.

Breakfast had not been concluded, when the Cannie Soogah, who had already got his hansel, as he called his breakfast, in the kitchen, made his appearance at the parlor window, which was immediately thrown up.

"God save all here," he exclaimed, "long life and good health to every one of you! Here I am, the rantin' *Cannie Soogah*, as large as life; and upon my profits maybe a little larger if the truth was known."

"Cannie," said the proctor, "dix me, but I'm glad to see you—and how are you, man?—and do you carry your bones safe—or your head upon your shoulders at all, durin' these wild times?"

"Troth, and you may well say they're wild times, Mr. Purcel, and it'll be wisdom in every one to keep themselves as safe as possible till they mend. Is it thruth, sir, that you're makin' preparations to collect your tides wid the help o' the sogers and polis?"

"Perfectly thrue, Cannie; we'll let the rascals that are misleading the people, as well as the people themselves, know whether they or the law are the strongest. They cannot blame us for the consequence, for we're forced to it."

"There will be bad work, thin, I'm afeard, sir; and bloody work, I dread."

"That's not our fault, Cannie, but the fault of those who will wilfully violate the law. However, let that pass, what's the news in the world?"

"I suppose you hard, sir, that the house of your friend and neighbor, that man that fears nothin'—" here there was the slightest perceptible grin upon the pedlar's face—"was attacked last night?"

"You don't mean O'Driscol's?"

"Upon my profits, I do—an' nobody else's."

"Hillo! do you hear this, girls? O'Driscol's house was attacked last night!"

"Heavenly father! I hope Alick is safe," exclaimed Mrs. Purcel, getting pale.

"Well, Cannie," inquired the proctor, quite coolly, and as if it was a matter of mere business, "what was the consequence? I hope nobody was hurt?"

"Why, that his son Fergus, sir—that fine young man that everybody was fond of——"

"Good God!" exclaimed the proctor, now really shocked at what he supposed the pedlar was about to say; "what is it you are goin' to tell us? I hope in God——"

"What is this!" exclaimed John; "heavens, Mary, you have spilled all the tea!"

"Mary, my child," exclaimed the mother, running to her; "what ails you?—in God's name, what is the matter?"

"A sudden faintness," replied the girl, recovering herself as if by an effort; "but it is over, and I—I am better."

"His son Fergus, sir—I hope Miss Mary is betther, sir—that his son Fergus and his father, by all accounts, gave them a warmer reception than they expected."

"But was none of O'Driscol's family hurt nor anybody else?" asked Purcel.

"No, sir, it seems not—and indeed I'm main glad of it."

"D—n you, Cannie," exclaimed the other, between jest and earnest, "why did you give me such a start? You told the affair as if Fergus had been shot—however, I'm glad that all's safe in O'Driscol's;—but about the night-boys? Were there any lives lost among *them?*"

"It's thought not, sir," replied the pedlar. "They left the marks o' blood behind them, but the general opinion is, that there was no life lost; I hope there wasn't—for, indeed, I have such a hatred against the shed-din' of blood, that I don't wish even to hear of it."

"What was their object, have you learned, in attacking O'Driscol's place?"

"Well, then, I didn't hear; but anyhow, they say that a new workin' boy of O'Driscol's, that dogged them up beyant Darby Hourigan's, was wounded by them, along with Darby himself, in regard of his having joined the young fellow in dodgin' afther them."

"Are they seriously hurt?" asked John.

"Throth that's more than I can say, but I hope they're not, poor fellows; at any rate, I'm sure Mr. O'Driscol will have them well taken care of till they're recovered."

"Certainly," observed the proctor, "if he thinks it his duty he will: my friend O'Driscol will do what he conceives to be right."

The pedlar nodded significantly, and hon-

[illegible] with a broad grin. [illegible] changing the conver- [illegible] as he likes, but [illegible] Come, ladies— [illegible] my favorite, Miss [illegible] well this morning, Can- [illegible] "she has a slight [illegible] then? Any purchases [illegible] -the next time, per-

[illegible] Purcel, "you praised your [illegible] at your last visit;—have [illegible] this morning?"

[illegible]? Wait till you see them."

[illegible] produced a case, which the proc- [illegible] and thus closed his sales for [illegible].

The pedlar, however, notwithstanding that his commercial transactions had been concluded, seemed somehow in no hurry. On the contrary, he took up his pack and exclaimed, "I must go back to the kitchen, till I see what can be done there in the way of business; hearin' that you were finishin' breakfast, I hurried up here to sell my goods and have my chat."

"Very well, Cannie," said the proctor, "try the folks below, and success to you!"

The pedlar once more sought the kitchen, where he lingered in fact more like a man who seemed fatigued than otherwise, inasmuch as his eyes occasionally closed, and his head nodded, in spite of him. He kept, however, constantly watching and peeping into the yard and lawn from time to time, as if he expected to see somebody. At length he got up and was about to go, when he said to Letty Lenehan:—"Ah, thin, Letty, afore I go I'd give a trifle that Miss Julia 'ud see a bracelet I got since I was here last; divil sich a beauty ever was seen."

"Very well, Cannie, I'll tell her if you wish."

"Then, Letty, may it rain honeycombs an you, an' do. I'll go round to the hall-door, say, and she can look at them there; an' see, Letty, say the sorra foot I'll go from the place till she sees it: that it'll be worth her while; and that if she knew how I got it, she'd fly—if she had wings—to get a glimpse of it."

He had not been more than a minute or two at the hall-door when Julia, struck by the earnestness of the man's language, which lost nothing in the transmission, made her appearance.

"Well now, Cannie," said she, "what wonderful matter is this you have got to show me?"

"Here it is, Miss Julia," said he, in his usual jocular and somewhat loud voice, "here it is, I'll have it in a minute—listen, Miss Julia," he added, in a solemn and impressive undertone: "what I'm goin' to say is more to you than aither life or death. Don't go out by yourself—don't go at all out early in the morning or late in the evenin'."

"Why so, Cannie?" she asked.

"Why, miss, it came to me by accident only; but the truth is there's a plot laid, it seems, to carry you off to the mountains."

"By whom, Cannie?"

"That's the very thing, miss, that I don't know; but a strange man met me on my way here this mornin' and tould me that he was a friend to your father—who was wanst a friend to him—and that, if I'd see you, to put you on your guard against goin' either to the poor or sick at the hours I spoke of; and he bid me say, too, that there's bad work and thraichery about you—and by no manner o' means to go any distance from your father's house—ay, thraichery, an from them you'd never think o' suspectin' for it. Now, miss, keep this counsel to yourself, and don't say it was I that tould you, but as you love a fair name and an unblemished character, act upon it. Dang me," he added, "but I had like to forget—if any message—I was bid to tell you—should come from Widow Lynch's, sayin' that her daughter's dyin' and wishes to see you, and that it's *afther dusk* it'll come—if it *does* come—well, if any sich message is sent to you, don't go—nor don't go for any message, no matther what it is—hem—ahem—oh! here I have it at last miss," he exclaimed in his natural voice, "isn't that a beauty?"

Julia got as pale as death for a moment, and then her brow became crimson with indignation. In fact, she saw not his bracelet—nor heard what he said in praise of it; but after a little time she said, "Thank you, Cannie, most seriously do I thank you—and you may rest assured I shall faithfully follow your advice."

"Do so, miss," he replied, "so God bless you and take care of you! and that's the worst the rantin' Cannie Soogah wishes you."

Alick Purcel almost immediately joined the family in the parlor, to whom he related a full and somewhat ludicrous account of the seige of O'Driscol Castle, as he called it—or Nassau Lodge. As our readers, however, are already aware of the principal particulars of that attack, we shall only briefly recapitulate what they already know, and confine ourselves to merely one portion of it, in which portion our doughty and heroic friend, the magistrate, was most peculiarly concerned.

"Having tested the martial magistrate's courage," he proceeded, "by a hint from Fergus, who was as much amused by it as I was, and finding that it was of the oozing or Bob Acres quality, we resolved, on hearing that the house was surrounded, to examine, and prime and load all the fire-arms in the house, as the case demanded. Some had been already loaded, but at all events we looked to them, and such as were uncharged we loaded on the spot, and then threw ourselves on the bed without undressing, in order that we might be ready for a surprise. Fergus and I, after having lain awake for a considerable time, taking it for granted that they had given up all intention of attacking the house, at length fell into a kind of wakeful doze from which we were at once aroused by a loud knocking at the hall-door. We quietly opened the drawing-room windows, and in a firm tone demanded what they wanted, and the answer was, that a friend of M'Carthy's wished very much to settle an account with him. We replied he was not in the house, and that even if he were, they should fight for him before they got him. We also told them our opinion of their conduct, and said, that if they did not leave the place, we would scatter the contents of a blunderbuss among them. I should state that they knew my voice, and said that they didn't want me then, but that my turn would come soon. When we had done speaking, a strong mellow voice, which I'll swear was not strange to me, said something to them in Irish, and the next moment the windows were shivered with bullets. Fortunately, we kept ourselves out of their range; but at all events, we had light enough to see them put their fire-arms to their shoulders, and time enough to stand aside. We returned the fire instantly, but whether with any fatal effect or not we could not say. When the smoke cleared away they had disappeared, but early this morning traces of blood were found on the spot. A servant of O'Driscol's, named Phil Hart, says they received no injury, for that he followed them at a distance up as far as Darby Hourigan's, near whose door they fired a couple of shots. Darby, it appears, joined Hart, having been aroused by the report of fire-arms; and both, on being discovered on their track, were fired at and wounded. Hart says it is his blood that is on the lawn, and perhaps it may be so, but I rather think the fellows did not escape scot-free at any rate."

"But where," asked John, "was the magistrate all this time?"

"That's precisely what I am coming to," replied Alick; "the fact was that the martial magistrate, who, I believe in my soul, lay shivering with terror on his bed the whole previous part of the night, on hearing our dialogue with the Whiteboys, and the report of the fire-arms, altogether disappeared, and it was not until two or three searches had been made for him, that he was discovered squatted three double in the coal-hole. On hearing and recognizing our voices, he started up, and commenced searching round him in the aforesaid coal-hole. 'Come, sir!' he exclaimed, in a voice of most ludicrous swagger, 'come, you scoundrel! I'll unkennel you—whoever may be afraid of you, I'm not—my name's O'Driscol, sirra—Fitzgerald O'Driscol, commonly called for brevity's sake, Fitzy O'Driscol—a name, sir, that ought to strike terror into you—and if it didn't, it isn't here I'd be hunting you—out with you now—surrendher, I say, or if you don't upon my honor and conscience you're a dead man.' 'What's the matter, sir?' I asked—'in Heaven's name, who have you there?' 'Who is in the coal-hole, father?' asked Fergus, with a face whose gravity showed wonderful strength of muscle. 'Yes, gentlemen,' replied the magistrate 'heroes that you are—riflemen from a window—upon my honor and conscience, I think courage is like the philosopher's stone—here have I, while you were popping like schoolboys out of the window, pursued their leader single-handed into the coal-hole, for I'm sure he's in it, or if not, he must have escaped some other way—d—n the villain, I hope he hasn't escaped, at all events—here, lights, I say, and guard all the passes—d—n it, let us do our business with proper discipline and skill—fall back, Fergus—and you, John, advance—steady now—charge the coal-hole, boys, and I'll lead you on to the danger.' Of course he was half drunk, but at the same time he managed to conceal his cowardice with considerable adroitness. I need not say that upon examining the coal-hole, and every other possible place of concealment there was no desperate leader found, nor any proof obtained that an entrance had been effected at all. 'Well, come,' exclaimed O'Driscol; 'although the villain has escaped, we managed the thing well—all of us—he must have given me the slip from the kitchen and leaped out of a window. You acted well, boys; and as I like true courage and resolution—ay, an' if you like, downright desperation—being a bit of a dare-devil myself—I say I will give you a glass of brandy-and-water each, and the intrepid old veteran will take one himself. Ah! wait till my friend the Castle hears of this exploit—upon my sowl and honor, it will be a feather in my cap.' Fergus whispered to me, 'It ought

to be a white one, then.' We accordingly adjourned in the dining-room, where after having finished a tumbler of brandy-and-water each, we at length went to bed, and thus closed the seige of O'Driscol Castle."

Julia on hearing of this attack and its object, felt her mind involved in doubt and embarrassment. She could not reconcile the desire of the Whiteboys to injure M'Carthy, with the fact of his having, by his own admission, spent the night among them. Or what if the attack was a mere excuse to prevent any suspicion of his connection with them at all? She knew not, and until she had arrived at some definite view of the matter, she resolved to keep as much aloof from M'Carthy as she could possiby do without exciting observation. In the course of the morning, however, they met accidentally, and the short dialogue which took place between her and him did not at all help to allay the suspicions with which her mind was burdened and oppressed.

"My dear Julia," said he, "I see that you are offended with me, but indeed you need not; I can give you a full and satisfactory explanation of my black face, if that be the cause of offence."

"Some other time, Mr. M'Carthy, I may hear your explanation; but not just now."

"I cannot bear your displeasure," he added; "and you know it."

"I wish you had felt as anxious not to deserve it."

"I am unconscious of having deserved it —but hear me, dearest Julia——"

"Well, sir, I do."

"Do you not go to see Widow Lynch's poor sick daughter this evening?"

"No, sir."

"No, sir, and well, sir—good heavens! what means this all?—I am anxious, I say, to give you a full explanation, and if you would only pay a visit this evening to the widow's, I could meet you and explain everything."

The Cannie Soogah's warning here pressed upon her mind with peculiar force.

"But," she replied, "I shall not go this evening."

"Well, will you say what evening you intend to go?"

"No, sir," she replied; "I don't intend to go in future, either morning or evening. Good-bye, Mr. M'Carthy, some time must elapse before I can listen to your explanation."

"Is this generous, Julia?"

"I believe it is just, Frank. Ask your own conscience, whether you are entitled to any confidence from me—good-bye."

And with these words, she tripped up to the drawing-room, where she joined her mother and sister.

M'Carthy, after having settled down from the tumult occasioned by these cowardly and murderous attempts upon his life, could not help indulging in the deepest indignation against the vile and unmanly systems of secret confederation in crime, by which the country was infested and disgraced; its industry marred, its morality debauched, and its love of truth changed into the practice of dissimulation, falsehood, and treachery. He accordingly determined, as far as in him lay, to penetrate the mystery, and ascertain the danger by which he was surrounded, and if possible, to punish his unmanly and ferocious enemies. He consequently lodged informations against Frank Finnerty, for whose apprehension a warrant was issued; but thanks to the kind services of his friend Mogue Moylan, Finnerty was duly forewarned, and when our friend, the heroic O'Driscol, armed to the teeth, and accompanied by as many police as would have captured a whole village, arrived at and surrounded his house, he found that the bird had flown, and left nothing but empty walls behind him.

CHAPTER XIV.

State of the Country—O'Driscol rivals Falstaff—Who Buck English was supposed to be.

M'Carthy, on finding that he had failed, in consequence of the disappearance of Finnerty, in developing the system which nurtured such cowardly and inhuman principles, now found it necessary, independent of all threats uttered against him, to return to college in order to prosecute his studies, and maintain the high position which he had there obtained by honors already won, and the general brilliancy of his answering. A kind of love-quarrel had taken place between himself and Julia Purcel, which, as is frequently the case, prevented him on the one side from giving, and her on the other, from receiving an explanation. The consequence was that they separated, each laboring under that yearning of the heart towards the other, which combines the most delicious sensations connected with the passion—tenderness disguised under an impression of offence, hope, uncertainty, and that awful anger that is never to forgive or change, but which, in the meantime, is furtively seeking for an opportunity to be reconciled, and vent its rage in kisses and in tears.

In the meantime, the state of the country was fast becoming such as had seldom, or

perhaps never been recollected by living man. The confederation, conspiracy, opposition, rebellion, or what you will, had risen to a gigantic height. In point of fact, it ought rather to have been termed an unarmed insurrection. Passive resistance was the order and the practice of the day. The people were instructed by the agitators, or rather by the great agitator himself, to oppose the laws without violating them; a piece of advice which involved an impossibility in the first place, but which was as false in itself, as replete with dishonesty and imposture, as it was deceitful and treacherous to the poor people who were foolish and credulous enough to be influenced by it. We are not now assailing the Whigs for the reforms which they effected in the Irish establishment, because we most cordially approve of them. Nay, more, we are unquestionably of opinion that that reform was not only the boldest, the most brilliant, but the most just and necessary act of policy, which they ever offered as a boon to this country. But what we do blame them for is, that they should have suffered themselves to be kept in such gross ignorance of the state of the Irish church, as to allow its shocking and monstrous corruptions to remain uncorrected so long; that they should have allowed themselves to be baffled and imposed upon, and misled by the hypocritical howlings and fictitious alarms of the old Tory party, who, whenever they felt the slightest dread that the Irish Establishment would slip through their fingers, filled heaven and earth with prophetic denunciations against England, not for-bearing to threaten the very throne itself with a general alienation of Protestant attachment and allegiance, if any of its worst and rottenest corruptions should be touched. No; the Whigs should have known the state and condition of the Irish church from clear and correct sources, and not have subjected the country to the pernicious and degrading consequences of a turbulent agitation. What is just in itself ought to be conceded to reason and utility, and not witheld until violence and outrage seem to extort it; for this only holds out a bounty to future agitation. Be this as it may, the whole country, at the period of which we write, was in a state of general commotion and tumult altogether unparalleled. Law was completely paralyzed, set at defiance, and laughed at. Large bodies, consisting of many thousands, traversed different parts of the country in open day, swearing every one they met to resist the payment of tithes in every way and in every sense. Many gentlemen, who had either paid it or been suspected to do so, or who had been otherwise obnoxious as landlords, or for strong party feeling, were visited by these licentious multitudes with an intention of being put to death, whilst the houses of several wealthy farmers, who had unfortunately paid the hated impost, were wrecked in the face of day. Nor was this all: men were openly and publicly marked for destruction, and negotiations for their murder entered into in fairs, and markets, and houses of entertainment, without either fear or disguise. In such a state of things, it is unnecessary to say that many lives were taken, and that great outrages were from time to time committed. Two or three clergymen were murdered, several tithe-proctors or collectors of tithe were beaten nearly to death; and to such a pitch did the opposition rise, that at length it became impossible to find any one hardy and intrepid, or, in other words, mad enough, to collect tithe, unless under the protection either of the military or police. Our friends, Proctor Purcel and his sons, were now obliged, not merely to travel armed, but frequently under the escort of police. Their principal dread, however, was from an attack upon their premises at night; and, as fearful threats were held out that such an attack would be made, Purcel, who, as the reader knows, was a man of great wealth, engaged men to build a strong and high wall about his house and out-offices, which could now be got at only through a gate of immense strength, covered with thick sheet-iron, and bound together by bars of the same metal, in such a way that even the influence of fire could not destroy it, or enable an enemy to enter.

With such a condition of society before us, it is scarcely necessary to inform our readers that the privations of the Protestant clergy were not only great, but dreadful and without precedent. It was not merely that their style of living was lowered or changed for the worse, but that they suffered distress of the severest description—want, destitution, and hunger, in their worst forms. First came inconvenience from a delay in the receipt of their incomes; then the necessity of asking for a longer term of credit; after this the melancholy certainty that tithes would not be paid; again followed the pressure from creditors for payment, with its distracting and harassing importunities; then the civil but firm refusal to supply the necessaries of life on further credit; then again the application to friends, until either the inclination or ability failed, and benevolence itself was exhausted. After this came the disposal of books, furniture, and apparel; and, when these failed, the secret grapple with destitution, the broken spirit, the want of food—famine, hunger, disease, and, in some

cases, death itself. These great sufferings of a class who, at all events, were educated gentlemen, did not occur without exciting, on their behalf, deep and general sympathy from all classes. In their prosperity, the clergy, as a body, raised and spent their income in the country. They had been kind and charitable to the poor, and their wives and daughters had often been ministering angels to those who were neglected by the landlords or gentry of the neighborhood, their natural protectors. It is true, an insurrection exhibiting the manifestation of a general and hostile principle against the source of their support, had spread over the country; but, notwithstanding its force and violence, the good that they had done was not forgotten to them in the hour of their trials and their sorrows. Many a man, for instance, whose voice was loud in the party procession, and from whose lips the shout of "down with the blood-stained tithe!" issued with equal fervor and sincerity, was often known to steal, at the risk of his very life, in the dead hour of night, to the house of the starving parson and his wo-worn family, and with blackened face, that he might not by any possibility be known, pay the very tithes for whose abolition he was willing to peril his life. Nay, what is more, the priest himself—the actual living idolatrous priest, the benighted minister of the Scarlet Lady, has often been known to bring, upon his own broad and sturdy shoulders, that relief in substantial food which has saved the lives of more than one of those ungodly parsons, who had fattened upon a heretic church, and were the corrupted supporters of the mammon of unrighteousness. Here, in fact, was the popish, bigoted priest—the believer in transubstantiation, the denouncer of political enemies, the advocate of exclusive salvation, the fosterer of pious frauds, the "surpliced ruffian," as he has been called, and heaven knows what besides, stealing out at night, loaded like a mule, with provisions for the heretical parson and his family—for the Bible-man, the convent-hunter, the seeker after filthy lucre, and the black slug who devoured one-tenth of the husbandman's labors. Such, in fact, was the case in numberless instances, where the very priest himself durst not with safety render open assistance to his ecclesiastical enemy, the parson.

In this combination against tithe, it is to be observed, that, as in all other agitations, whether the object be good or otherwise, those who took a principal part among the people in the rural districts were seldom any other than the worst and most unprincipled spirits—reckless ruffians and desperate vagabonds, without any sense of either religious or moral obligation to restrain them from the commission of outrage. It is those men, unfortunately, who, possessed of strong and licentious energies, are always the most active and contaminating in every agitation that takes place among us, and who, influenced by neither shame nor fear, and regardless of consequences, impress their disgraceful character upon the country at large, and occasion the great body of society to suffer the reproach of that crime and violence which, after all, only comparatively a few commit.

Our friend the proctor, we have already stated, had collected the tithes of three or four parishes; and it is unnecessary, therefore, to say, that the hostility against him was spread over a wide and populous district. This was by no means the case with O'Driscol, who was much more the object of amusement to the people than of enmity. The mask of bluster, and the cowardly visage it covered, were equally well known in the neighborhood; and as the Irish possess a quick and almost instinctive perception of character, especially among their superiors, we need scarcely say that they played off, on more than one occasion, many ludicrous pranks at his expense. He was certainly a man of great importance, at least in his own opinion, or if he *did* understand himself, he wished, at all events, to be considered so in the eyes of others. He possessed, however, much more cunning than any one would feel inclined to attribute to him, and powers of flattery that were rarely ever equalled. He was, in fact, one of the few men who could administer that nauseating dose, without permitting the person who received it to become sensible that he did so. He had scraped together some wealth by the good old system of jobbing—had got himself placed upon the Grand Panel of the county, and ultimately, by some corrupt influence at an election, contrived to have the merit of returning the government candidate, a service which procured him a magistracy. O'Driscol was very fond of magnifying trifles, and bestowing a character of importance upon matters that were of the utmost insignificance. For instance, if a poor decrepit devil, starving in a hut, and surrounded by destitution and beggary, were to be arrested for some petty misdemeanor, he would mount his horse with vast pomp, and proceed at the head of twelve or eighteen armed policemen to make his caption. But, on the contrary, whenever any desperate and intrepid character was to be apprehended—some of those fellows like the notorious Ryan (Puck), who always carried a case of pistols or a blunderbuss about them, or perhaps both—our vali-

ant magistrate was either out of the way or had a visit from the gout—a complaint which he was very fond of parading, because it is one of aristocratic pretensions, but one, of which, we are honestly bound to say, he had never experienced a single twitch.

We have already stated that he had received a threatening notice, and attempted to describe the state of conflicting emotions into which it threw him. We forgot to state, however, that he had before received several other anonymous communications of a somewhat more friendly stamp; the difference between them being the simple fact, that the one in question was read, and the others of his own composition.

The latter were indeed all remarkable for containing one characteristic feature, which consisted in a solemn but friendly warning that if he (the magistrate) were caught at a particular place, upon a particular day, it might be attended with dangerous consequences to himself. Our magistrate, however, was not a man to be frightened by such communications; no,—"He was well known in the neighborhood, and he would let the cowardly scoundrels feel what a determined man could be. He thought his daredevil character had been sufficiently known; but since it seemed that it was not, he would teach them a lesson of intrepidity—the scoundrels." His practice was, on such occasions, to get a case of pistols, mount his horse, and, in defiance to all entreaty to the contrary, proceed to the place of danger, which he rode past, and examined with an air of pompous heroism that was ludicrous in the extreme.

One morning, about this time, he sat at breakfast, reading the *Potwollopers' Gazette, or the No-Popery Advocate*, when, as usual, he laid it down, and pushing it over to Fergus, he resumed his toast and butter.

"Well, now," said he, upon my honor and conscience, it is extraordinary how these matters creep into the papers. At all events, Fergus, my friend the Castle will persaive what kind of stuff it's best supporters consist of."

"Very appropriate, sir," replied Fergus—"stuff is an excellent word."

"And why is it an excellent word, Fergy?"

"It is so significant, sir, as an illustration?"

"Well, I dare say it is," returned the father; "don't we say of a game man, such a fellow has good stuff in him? but, setting that aside, do look at the paragraph about that attack'! My friend Swiggerly has done me full justice. Upon my word, it is extramely gratifying, and especially in such critical times as these. Read it for Kate there, will you?"

"What is it, papa?"

"An account, my dear, of the attack made upon us, and of—but Fergus will read it out for you."

Fergus accordingly read as follows:—

"EXTRAORDINARY COURAGE AND INTREPIDITY—SEVERAL HUNDRED WHITEBOYS MOST SPIRITLY REPULSED—FITZGERALD O'DRISCOL, ESQ., J. P.

"On the night of the 24th ultimo, the house of this most active and resolute magistrate was attacked by a numerous band of ruffianly Whiteboys, amounting to several hundreds—who, in defiance of his well-known resolution, and forgetting the state of admirable preparation and defence in which he always maintains his dwelling-house, surrounded it with the intention, evidently, of visiting upon him the consequences of his extraordinary efforts at preserving the peace of the country, and bringing offenders to justice. The exact particulars of this fearful conflict have not reached us, but we may, without offence, we trust, to the modesty of Mr. O'Driscol, venture to give a general outline of the circumstances, as far as we have heard them. About two o'clock, on the morning alluded to, and while the whole family were asleep, an attempt was made to break open the hall-door. This, however, having been heavily chained, barred, and bolted, and the keys removed to Mr. O'Driscol's sleeping-room, resisted all attempts of the Whiteboys to enter—a circumstance which filled them with fury and indignation. In a moment the family were alarmed, and up. On that night it so happened that Mr. Alick Purcel, a friend and neighbor of Mr. O'Driscol's, happened to be staying with them, and almost immediately Mr. O'Driscol, placing the two young men in something like a steady military position, led them on personally, in the most intrepid manner, to a position behind the shutters. From this place the fire of the enemy was returned for a considerable time with equal bravery, and, it is presumed, effect, as the grounds about the hall-door were found the next morning to be stained with blood in several places. The heroism of the night, however, is yet to be related. Mr. O'Driscol, who was certainly supported by his son and Mr. Purcel in a most able and effective manner, hearing a low, cautious noise in the back part of the house, went to *reconnoitre*, just in time to grapple with the leader of these villains—a most desperate and ferocious character—cruel, fearless, and of immense personal strength. He must have got in by some unaccountable means not yet discovered, with the hope, of course, of admitting his accom-

plices from without. A terrific struggle now ensued, which terminated by the fellow, on finding, we presume, the mettle of the person opposed to him, flying down stairs towards the kitchen, and from thence, as Mr. O'Driscol thought, to the coal-hole, whether he fearlessly pursued him, but in vain. On examining the coal-hole, which Mr. O'Driscol did personally in the dark—we really shudder at that gentleman's absence of all fear—the ferocious Whiteboy could not be found in it. The presumption is that he gave Mr. O'Driscol the slip during pursuit, doubled back, and escaped from the lobby window, which, on examination, was found open. On this almost unprecedented act of bravery it is useless to indulge in comment, especially as we are restrained by regard for Mr. O'Driscol's personal feelings and well-known modesty on this peculiar subject. His worthy son, we are aware, inherits his father's courage."

"The devil I do!" exclaimed Fergus; "ha! ha! ha! Faith, I'm braver than I had given myself credit for."

"And we are glad to hear that the present government, sensible of their obligations to Fitzgerald O'Driscol, Esq., are about to confer the office of Stipendiary Magistrate upon his son. We are, indeed, glad to hear this; the office cannot possibly be better bestowed; and thus, so far as relates to his father, at least, may valuable public services in critical times be ever appropriately rewarded!"

"Well, Fergy, what do you think of our friend Swiggerly now?"

"In God's name, sir, what does all this rigmarole, in which there is scarcely a word of truth, mean?"

"Mane! why it manes, sir, that I am anxious to get you a Stipendiary Magistracy."

"A Stipendiary Magistracy, father, if you wish and if you can; but not by such means as this—it is shameful, father, indeed it is."

"I tell you, Fergus, that unless a man plays a game in this world, he has little business in it. Manes! Why, what objections can you have to the manes? A bit of a harmless paragraph that contains very little more than the truth. I tell you that I threw it out as a hint to my friend the Castle, and I hope it will act on it, that's all."

"Well, well," exclaimed the son, laughing, "take care you don't overdo the business; for my own part, I wish to obtain a magistracy only by honorable means;—that is, since you have put the matter into my head, for until last week I never once thought of it."

"Neither did I until a couple of weeks ago; and between you and me, Fergus, the country's in a devil of a state—a very trying one for Stipendiaries," replied his father; "but it struck me that I am myself rather advanced in years for such an appointment, and, in the meantime, that something of the kind might be in *your* way, and it is for this rason that I am feeling the pulse of my friend the Castle."

"But I am too young, sir, for such an appointment."

"Not at all, you blockhead; although you get a magistracy in the paragraph, you don't imagine, I expect, you should get one directly. No, no; there are gradaytions in all things. For instance, now,—first a Chief Constableship of Police; next, a County Inspectorship; and thirdly, a Stipendiary Magistracy. It is aisy to run you through the two first in ordher to plant you in the third—eh? As for me I'm snug enough, unless they should make me a commissioner, of excise or something of that sort, that would not call me out upon active duty; but, at all events, there's nothing like having one's eye to business, and being on the look-out for an opportunity."

"You know, father," observed Fergus, "I don't now nor ever did approve of the system or principle you pursue in these matters, and as I will not join you in them, I can only say if I do receive a government appointment, I shall not owe it to anything personally unbecoming myself."

"Ah, you're young and green yet, Fergus, but time and expariance will open your eyes to your own interests, and you'll live to acknowledge the folly of having scruples with the world—ay will you."

"It may be so, sir; but I thank God the time you speak of has not come yet."

"Well," continued his father, "now that we have talked over that matter, read this;" and, as he spoke, he handed Fergus a notice, evidently a friendly one, to the following effect—

"*Sunda.*

"MR. O'DRISCOL.—It's said that ye're to go to Lisnagola on Shoosda next. Now I tel ye there's a set upon yer life—don't go on that day, or it'll bee worser for ye—any way don't pass Philpot's corner betuxt 2 and fore o'cluck.

"A FRIEND THAT YEW WANST SARVED."

"What do you think of that, Fergus?"

"Why, sir, it's a proof that you have friends among these turbulent people. I hope you don't intend going to Lisnagola on that day; by the way it must mean this day, for this is Tuesday, and the note or notice, or whatever you call it, is dated on Sunday, I perceive. I trust you don't intend to go to-day, sir, and expose yourself.

"I shall certainly go, sir," replied his father, rising up quite indignantly. "What do you think I am? Do you think, sir, that I—Fitzgerald O'Driscol, am the man to be intimidated by blood-thirsty dogs like these? No, sir. I shall, at the proper time, arm myself, mount my good horse and ride, calm as a milestone, past the very spot. D—n the rascals! do they think to terrify *me?*"

"If the author of that letter does," replied Fergus, "he is most certainly mistaken;" and as he said so he looked significantly at his sister, who smiled as one would who thoroughly understood the matter.

Just at that moment, Alick Purcel was seen approaching the hall-door, and in a few minutes he joined them.

"Well, Alick," said the magistrate, "all well at Longshot Lodge—all safe and sound for so far?"

"All well, sir, thank you, and safe and sound for so far."

"Do you know what I think, Alick?"

"No, sir."

"Upon my honor and conscience I am of opinion, that it's something in your favor to live so near to me. I act as a kind of protection for you, Alick. I am morally convinced, ay, and have good raison to know it from more than one quarther, that your father's house would have been attacked long since, if it were not for the near neighborhood of dare-devil O'Driscol. And yet these fellows like courage, Alick; for instance, read that warning. There you see is a plot laid for my life; but I'll show the villains that they have the wrong sow by the ear. I have showed them as much before, and will show them as much again."

He then handed the note, with an air of triumph, to Alick, who read it over and assumed a look of great terror.

"Of course you will be guided by this, Mr. O'Driscol."

"Of course I will *not*, Mr. Purcel; not a bit of it. I will ride—armed, of course—past Philpot's corner this very day, at half-past three o'clock; that is all *I* say."

"Well all *I* can say," returned Alick, "is that you are a fearfully-determined man, sir."

"I grant that, Alick, I know I am; but then it is in my nature. I was born with it—I was born with it. Any news?"

"Why not much, sir. That scoundrel, Buck English, has written to my father, notwithstanding all that happened, to know if he will consent to let Julia marry him. He says in his letter that, although he may be put off with a refusal now, he will take good care that he shan't be unsuccessful the next time he asks her."

"Does nobody, or can nobody find out how that scoundrel—" here the valorous magistrate's voice sank as if instinctively, and he gave a cautious glance about him at the same time, but seeing none but themselves present he resumed his courage—"how that rascal finds manes to cut the figure he does?"

"I believe not," replied the other; "but for my part, I am often disposed to look upon the man as mad; yet still the puzzle is to think how he lives in such buck style—the vagabond. He certainly is involved in some mystery, for every one you meet or talk to is afraid of him."

"No, not every one, Alick; come, come, my boy, every general rule has an exception; whisper—I could name you one who is not afraid of him"—and this he said in a jocular tone—"I only wish," he added, raising his voice with more confidence, "that I could get my thumb upon him, I would—"

He was here interrupted by a loud but mellow voice, which rang cheerfully with the following words:—

"I'm the rantin' Cannie Soogah."

"Ha! the Jolly Pedlar! Throw open the window, Fergus, till we have a chat with him. Well, my rantin' Cannie Soogah, how are you?"

"Faith, your honor, I'm jist betwixt and between, as they say—naither betther nor worse, but mixed middlin', like the praties in harvest. However, it's good to be any way at all in these times; so thank God my head's on my body still."

"Cannie," said Fergus, "we were just talking of Buck English. Mr. Purcel here says that there's some mystery about him; for nobody knows how he lives, and every one almost is afraid of him. My Father, however, denies that every one is afraid of him."

"Buck English!" exclaimed the pedlar. "Mr. O'Driscol, darlin', what did your honor say about him?"

"Why, I—I—a-hem—I wished to have the pleasure, Cannie, of—of—shaking hands with the honest fellow; was not that it, Alick?"

"Hands, or thumbs, or something that way," replied Alick; "threatening him, as it were."

"Shaking hands, upon honor, Alick—thumb to thumb, you know."

"Well, Mr. O'Driscol, you're well known to have more o' the divil than the man in you—beggin' your pardon, sir, for the freedoms I'm takin'—but it's all for your own good I'm doin' it. Have you e're a mouse-hole about your place, sir?"

"A-hem! Why, Cannie," asked O'Driscol, with an expression of strong alarm in his

face—"why do you ask so—so—singular a question as that?"

"Bekaise, sir, sooner than you should breathe—mind, breathe's the word—one syllable against Buck English, I'd recommend you to go into the mouse-hole I spoke of, and never show your face out of it agin. I—an' everybody knows me, an' likes me, too, I hope—I meek—hem! throth I do make it a point never to name him at all, barrin' when I can't help it. Nobody knows anything about him, they say. By all accounts, he never sleeps a week, or at any rate more than a week, in the same place; an' whatever dress he has on comin' to any particular part of the counthry, he never changes; but they say that if you find him in any other part of the counthry, he has a different dress on him: he has a dress, they say, for every part."

"He has honored my father," said Alick, "by sending him a written proposal for my sister Julia—ha! ha! ha!"

"Well, now, did he, Mr. Alick?"

"Yes; and he says that he may be refused now, but won't the next time he asks her."

"Well, then, Mr. Alick, I'll tell you what I'd advise you to do: go home, and tell your father to send for him, if he knows where to find him, and let him not lose a day in marryin' her to him; for if everything is thrue that's said of him, he was never known to break a promise, whether it was for good or ill."

"Ha! ha! ha! thank you, Cannie,—excellent!" replied Alick.

"Who can he be, Cannie?" asked Miss O'Driscol, "this person of such wonderful mystery? I have never seen him, but I wish I could."

"Ay, have you, often—I'll engage, Miss."

"And so do I," added her father; "I wish to see him also, and to have everything mysterious cleared up."

"Well," continued the pedlar, "I know nothing myself about him, only as I hear; but if all's thrue that's said, he could give your father, and you, Mr. Alick, lave to walk through the whole counthry in the hour of noonday or midnight, widout a finger ever bein' raised against one o' you; and as for you, Mr. O'Driscol, he could have the house pulled about your ears in an hour's time, if he wished—ay, and he would, too, if he heard that you spoke a harsh word of him."

"As for me, Cannie," replied the magistrate, "I trust I'm a Christian man, and not in the habit of abusing the absent. Indeed, I don't see what right any one has to make impertinent inquiries into the life or way of living of any respectable person—I do not see it, Cannie; and, I assure you, I always set my face against such prying inquiries."

"I know, myself," continued the pedlar, "that there's a great many things said about him, an' people wishes to know who he is. Now I was tould a thing wanst by a sartain parson—I won't say who, but I believe it's not a thousand miles from the truth—I'm spakin' about who he is."

"And who is he?" asked Fergus; "out with it Cannie."

"Well, then," he proceeded, in a cautious and confidential whisper, "it's said by them that ought to know, that he's an illaygal brother to the Great Counsellor. There now, you have it."

"Is it to Counsellor O'Connell?"

"Ay, to Counsellor O'Connell—divil a one else. He's as like him as two pays, barrin' the color o' the hair. Sure the Counsellor puts every one down that crosses him, and so does Buck English. Miss Katherine, darlin,' won't you buy something? Here's the best of everything; don't be afeard of high prices. My maxim always is—to buy dear and sell chape, for the sake o' the fair sect. Come, gintlemen, Cannie Soogah's pack is a faist for the leedies—hem—I mane a feest for the ladies—hillo—ha! ha! ha! there's a touch of Buck English himself for you. Well, of coorse, what's a faist for the ladies must surely be a thrate to the gintlemen."

Alick here availed himself of M'Carthy's experience, and presented Miss O'Driscol with a beautiful bracelet; O'Driscol and Fergus purchased some pocket-handkerchiefs and other matters, and our Jolly Pedlar went on his way rejoicing.

Fergus O'Driscol who was a shrewd and keen observer, could perceive, during the foregoing interview, that there was on the pedlar's countenance an expression of grave, hard, solemn irony, which it was difficult to notice, or having noticed it, to penetrate, or in any way analyse or understand. To him it was a complete enigma, the solution of which seized very strongly on his imagination, and set all his powers of reasoning and investigation to work. All admitted there was a mystery about Buck English; but Fergus felt a strong impression that there was one equally impenetrable about the pedlar himself. Having little else, however, than a passing thought, a fancy, on which to ground this surmise, he prudently concealed it, from an apprehension of being mistaken, and, consequently, of subjecting himself to ridicule.

Fergus now brought Alick out to the garden, where they seemed to enjoy a very merry dialogue if several fits of hearty laughter may be said to constitute mirth; after this Alick went home; not, however, we should say,

until he first contrived to enjoy a short *tête-à-tête* with Miss O'Driscol.

When the hour for the departure of the magistrate to test the resolution of the "men in buckram," who had resolved upon his assassination, had arrived, he most magnanimously got a double case of pistols, and in spite of all remonstrance from both son and daughter, he mounted his horse—Duke Schomberg—and in a most pompous and heroic spirit rode forth to quell the latent foe.

We have already stated that O'Driscol's real character was thoroughly known by the country-folks around him, as the character of every such person usually is. Whilst he proceeds, then, upon his daring and heroic enterprise, we beg leave to state very briefly, that Fergus and Alick Purcel, having laid their heads together, procured, each, two of their father's laborers, whom they furnished material wherewith to blacken their faces; not omitting four large cabbage-stalks, with the heads attached, and kept under the right arm of each. These had been trimmed and blackened also, in order to have more the appearance of fire-arms. Thus armed, and with appropriate instructions, they planted themselves inside the hedges which inclosed the narrow turn of the road at Philpot's cornet, and awaited their "unsuspecting victim," as the phrase unhappily, and with too much truth, goes.

O'Driscol, on approaching the fatal spot, regretted that there were no eyes upon this extraordinary manifestation of courage. He stretched up his neck and looked about him in all directions, with a hope that some one might observe the firmness and utter absence of all fear with which he came up to the place where the assassins were to lie in wait for him. He had now come within ten or twelve yards of it when, such was the force of his own cowardly imagination, that it had worked him up from a fictitious into a real terror; and on approaching the spot, he could not prevent himself from coughing pretty loudly, in order to ascertain that there really was no such thing as an assassin behind the hedges. He coughed, we say, with a double case of pistols in his hand, when, heaven and earth! was the cough responded to—and in a jarring style—from behind the hedge to the right? He paused, pulled up his horse, and coughed again, when it also was responded to from that on the left; and at the same time four faces, dreadfully blackened, peeped, two on each side of him, and levelling their black and dreadful-looking blunderbusses—for they could be nothing else—were about to rid the world of a loyal magistrate, and deprive the Castle of its best friend and correspondent, when the latter gentleman, wheeling Duke Schomberg round, put him to most inglorious flight, and scampered off at the top of his speed.

The jest was admirably managed; and nothing could exceed the unction with which he related his encounter with the villains. In fact, upon Falstaff's principle, he had discharged his pistols on the way home, as a proof of the desperate contest he had had with the blood-thirsty scoundrels. Like all his other exploits, however, it was added to the catalogue of his daring conflicts with the Whiteboys, and, ere the lapse of twenty-four hours, was in possession of "his friend the Castle."

CHAPTER XV.

Scene in a Parsonage—An Anti-Tithe Ringleader.

HITHERTO we have described the tithe-agitation as one which was externally general as well as deep-rooted; and so far we were perfectly correct. Our readers, however, are not to understand by this that there did not exist among the people—ay, and the priesthood too—a strong under-current of sympathy for the sufferings of the protestant clergy. The latter had indeed been now reduced to such privation as it is pitiable even to look back upon. One-half the glebe-houses presented such symptoms of cold nakedness and destitution, such a wrecked and gutted appearance, as could scarcely be conceived at present. Hundreds of their occupants had been obliged to part by degrees with all that was valuable or could be turned into money. The elegant and accomplished young female, hitherto accustomed to all the comforts and luxuries of life, was now to be taught a lesson of suffering and endurance as severe as it was unexpected. Many—many such lessons were taught, and we may add—well and nobly, and with true Christian fortitude, were they borne. We have already said that Purcel had the collection of tithe for four Parishes, and now that the distress among the clergy and their families had assumed such a dreadful and appalling aspect, he had an opportunity of ascertaining the extraordinary respect and affection for them which existed after all in the minds of the people. His own house and premises were now so strongly secured, and his apprehension of nocturnal attacks so strongly justified by the threats he had already received, and the disorganized state of the country around him, that he was forced to decline receiving the tithe at unseasonable hours; it being impossible for him to know whether the offer of payment

might not have been a plan of the people to get into his dwelling, and wreak their vengeance upon him and his sons. Under these circumstances, his advice to them, communicated with due regard to his own safety, was to pay the money directly to the clergyman himself, or at least to some of his family: and this, indeed, when they lived near the clergyman, they always preferred doing. To be sure, the step was a hazardous one, but, as they say, where there is a will there is a way: and so it was in many instances on this occasion. The dead hour of the night was necessarily selected for the performance of this kind office, and in this way many an unexpected act of relief was experienced by the starving and destitute clergy, at the hands of the very persons who were sworn to abolish tithes, and to refuse paying them in any shape.

Sometimes, to be sure, when Purcel or his sons happened to be abroad on business, attended as they now generally were by policemen for their protection, a countryman, for instance, would hastily approach him or them, as the case might be, and thrusting a sum of money rolled up in paper into his hand, exclaim, "It's the thrifle o' the last gale o' rint, sir, that I was short in—you'll find a bit o' mummyrandim in the paper, that'll show you it's all right." This, uttered with a dry, significant expression of countenance, was a sufficient indication of the object intended. On examining the paper, it was generally found to contain some such direction as the following—

"Mr. Purcel, Sir—The enclosed is for the Rev. Misther Harvey. For God's sake, give it to him as soon as you can: as I undherstand himself and family is starvin', outright—I daren't give it to him myself, or be seen goin' near his house. Sure when we think of the good he done himself an' his family, whin they had the manes, it's enough to make one pity them, especially when we know what they're sufferin' so quietly, an' without makin' any hubbub about it: but sure, God help us, there's humbug enough in the country. Don't lose time, if you plase, Mr. Purcel, as I'm told that they're brought to the dry praitie at last, God help them."

It was in the early part of the day of O'Driscol's last triumph on Duke Schomberg, that John Purcel went to discharge to a clergyman in the next parish, a commission of a similar nature to that just recited. He drove there on a car, accompanied by three policemen, avoiding, as well as he could, all narrow and dangerous passes, and determined to return, if at all practicable, by a different road, for such of late was the practice of the family, when out on business. As it is, however, we shall leave him on his way, and take the liberty of requesting our readers to anticipate his arrival, for the purpose of getting a glimpse at the condition of those to whom he was carrying some slight means of mere temporary relief.

The clergyman, whose desolate habitation he was about to visit, had passed about sixty winters, fifteen of which he had spent in that house, and thirty in the parish. That is to say, he had been fifteen years curate, and fifteen rector, without ever having been absent more than a month or six weeks at a time: and even these absences occurred but rarely. We remember him well, and with affection, as who of his survivors that ever knew him does not? He was tall, that is, somewhat above the middle height, and until pressed down by the general affliction which fell upon his class and his family, he had been quite erect in his person. He was now bent, however, as by a load of years, and on his pale face lay the obvious traces of sorrow and suffering. But this was not all: whilst Destitution of the severest kind had impressed on that venerable countenance the melancholy exponent of her presence, Religion had also blended with it that beautiful manifestation of her unshaken trust in God: of patience, meekness, and a disposition to receive at his hands the severest dispensations of life, with a spirit of cheerful humility and resignation. Take a cursory glance at his face, and there, no doubt, you saw at once that sorrow and suffering lay. Look, however, a little longer: observe the benign serenity of that clear and cloudless eye: mark the patient sweetness of that firm and well-formed mouth, and the character of heroic tranquility that pervades his whole person, and sanctifies his sorrows, until they fill the heart of the spectator with reverence and sympathy, and his mind with a sense of the dignity, not to say sublimity, which religion can bestow upon human suffering, in which it may almost be said that the creature gains a loving triumph over the Creator himself.

Every one knows that, in general, the clergy of Ireland, as a class, lived from hand to mouth, and that the men who suffered most during the period of which we write were those whose livings were of moderate income. The favored individuals who enjoyed the rich and larger incumbencies, the calamity did not reach, or if it did, only in a slighter degree, and with but comparatively little effect. The cessation, therefore, of only one year's income to those who had no other

source of support on which to depend, was dreadful. In many instances, however, their tithes had been refused for two, and, in some localities, for nearly three years, although the opposition ot the payment had not for such a length of time assumed the fierce and implacable spirit which had characterized it during the last twelve months. These observations will now enable our readers to understand more clearly the picture with which we are about to present them.

On entering the house of this truly pious and patient pastor, the first thing that struck you was the sense of vacancy and desolation united. In other words, you perceived at a glance that everything of any value was gone. You saw scarcely any furniture—no clock, no piano, no carpeting, no mahogany chairs or tables, or at least none that were not of absolute necessity. Feather beds had gone, curtains had gone; and all those several smaller elegancies which it is difficult, and would be tedious, to enumerate here. Seated at a breakfast-table, in an uncarpeted parlor, was the clergyman himself, surrounded by his interesting but afflicted family. His hair, which, until within the last twelve months, had been an iron gray, was now nearly white, and his chin was sunk in a manner that had not, until recently, been usual with him. Servants, male and female, had been dismissed, and those whose soft, fair hands had been accustomed only to the piano, the drawing-pencil, or the embroidery-frame, were now engaged in the coarsest and commonest occupations of domestic life. Nor were they, too, without their honorable sacrifices of personal vanity and social pride, to the calamity that was upon them. Silks and satins, laces and gauzes, trinkets, unnecessary bonnets and veils, were all cheerfully parted with; and it was on such occasions that our friend the Cannie Soogah became absolutely a kind of public benefactor. He acted not only in the character of a pedlar, but in that of a broker; and so generally known were his discretion and integrity throughout the country, that such matters were disposed of to him at a far less amount of shame and suffering than they could have been in any other way.

The family in question consisted of the father, his wife, four daughters, and three sons; the eldest daughter had been, for some months, discharging the duty of governess in a family of rank; the eldest son had just got an appointment as usher in a school near the metropolis; two circumstances which filled the hearts of this affectionate family with a satisfaction that was proportionately heightened by their sufferings.

About this period they expected a letter from their daughter; and on the morning in question their father had dispatched one of his boys to the post-office, with a hope of receiving it. The male portion of the family were the younger, with the exception of the eldest son, who was their third child. Their position was as follows: the old man sat at the end of a plain table, with his bible open before him—for they had just concluded prayer: his wife, a younger-looking woman, and faded more by affliction than by age, sat beside him, holding on her breast their third daughter—she who had been once the star of their hearth, and who reclined there in mute sorrow, her pale cheek and wasted hands giving those fatal indications of consumption in its last stage, which so severely tries the heart of parent or relative to witness. The other two girls sat opposite, one of them in tears, turning her heart-broken look now upon the countenance of her father, and again upon that of her gentle, but almost dying sister, whilst her companion endeavored to soothe her little brother, who was crying for food; for the simple fact was, that they had not yet breakfasted, nor were the means of providing a breakfast under their roof. Their sole hope for that, as well as for more enlarged relief, depended upon the letter which they expected from their eldest daughter.

It is scarcely necessary to say that they all looked pale, sickly, and emaciated with suffering, and want of the comfortable necessaries of life. Their dress was decent, of course, but such as they never expected to have been forced to wear so long. The crying boy was barefooted, and the young creature who endeavored to console him had thin and worn slippers on her tender feet, and her snowy skin was in more than one place visible through the rents of her frock.

The old man looked at them, from time to time; and there might have been observed, notwithstanding the sweetness and placidity of his smile, a secret expression of inward agony—the physical and natural feelings of the parent and the man mingling, or rather struggling, with the great principle of dependence on God, without which he must at once have sunk down prostrate and hopeless.

"When," said the boy, "will Edward come from the post-office? Is there nothing at all in the house, mamma, that I could eat?"

"Hush! Frank," said his sister; "where's your generosity and your patience? Did we not all promise to think of papa and mamma before ourselves—yes, and of our poor Maria, too, who is so ill?"

"That is true," replied the boy, "but when I promised that, I wasn't so hungry as I am

now. But, still, if I had anything to eat, I would give the best part of it to papa or mamma, or Maria, if she could eat it—that is, after I had taken *one* mouthful for myself. Oh! will Ned never come from the post-office?"

"Mamma," said the sick girl, looking up into her mother's eyes, "I am sustained by one hope, and that is, that I will soon cease to be a burthen upon dear papa—my heart-broken papa and you. I am anxious to pass away to that blessed place where all tears shall be wiped from my eyes;" and as she spoke she raised herself a little, and quietly wiped one or two from them; "and," she proceeded, "where the weary will be at rest. Alas! how little did we expect or imagine this great weight of suffering!"

"My darling child," said her mother, kissing her pale cheek, and pressing her more tenderly to her bosom, "you have ever been more solicitous for the comfort and well-being of others than you have been for your own; yet, well and dearly as we love you, how can we grudge you to God? It was He who gave you to us—it is He who is taking you from us; and what can we say, but blessed be His name?"

"My children," said the old man, "what would life be if there were nothing to awaken us to a sense of our responsibilities to our Creator? If it presented to us nothing but one unshaken path of pleasure and ease—one equal round of careless enjoyment and indolent apathy? Alas! my darlings, do not we, who are aged and have experience, know that it is those who are not taken by calamity and suffering who gradually fall into that hardness of heart, which prevents the spirit from feeling one of the most wholesome of truths—that indifference is danger, and that a neglect of the things which belong to a better life, and which serve to prepare us for it, is the great omission of those who are not called upon to suffer. You know, my children, that whom God loveth He chasteneth, and it is true. To those whom He graciously visits with affliction, it may be said that He communicates, from time to time, a new revelation of Himself; for it is by such severe but wholesome manifestations that He speaks to and arouses the forgetful or the alienated heart. Our calamity, however, and sufferings, possess more dignity, and are associated with a greater work than that involved in the isolated sorrows of a single family. God is chastising a cold, corrupt, and negligent church, through the turbulence and outrage of the people. What has our church in this country been, within the memory of man, but a mere secular establishment, like the law or the army, into which men enter not from a lofty and pure sense of the greatness of their mission, but as a convenient means of securing an easy and indolent profession? I know not what our church might have been if left to herself; but this I do know, that for many a long year the unblushing iniquity of British policy has served only to corrupt and degrade her, and to make what ought to be the speaking oracle of God's truth, the consolation of the penitent sinner, the sure guide to the ignorant or the doubtful—yes, to make that Church, which ought to be a source of purity, of blessing, and of edification, to all—a system of corrupt rewards for political prostitution, parcelled out to meet the sordid spirit of family alliances and ungodly bargains; or, in other words, to turn her into a mass of bribes—a base appendage to the authority of the British minister, who used her as the successful medium of at once enslaving and demoralizing the country, instead of elevating and civilizing it. It is for this great neglect of national duty, and for permitting ourselves to be imbued with the carnal and secular spirit, which has led us so far from practical truth and piety, that the church is now suffering. We have betrayed our trust, and been treacherous both to God and man. For my own part, my children, I am glad that I and mine have been counted worthy to suffer in this cause. We are now passing through the furnace, but we shall come out purified. Our grossness shall be purged away, and the proud spirit of mammon burned out of us. But you know that God, my dear ones, can accomplish a double purpose by the same means. Our church shall be exalted and purified, and her ministers prepared for a higher and holier mission than that in which they have hitherto been engaged. She shall awaken to a sense of her great responsibility; a new spirit shall be created within her; a living energy shall characterize those who have slumbered under the unholy shadows which she has cast around her, and those who think that they are smiting her unto death shall find that they have been made only the instruments in God's hands for the purification of her body and the regeneration of her spirit. Charles," he added, turning to the boy, who still wept, although as furtively as he could, "bear up, my child: Ned, you may rest assured, will make as little delay as possible, and I hope he will bring us relief."

"Mamma," said the invalid, looking up tenderly into her face, "will you—oh! no, not you, mamma—Emily will—a mouthful of drink, Emily dear, and let it be pure water, Emily; I think it agrees with me best."

"Alas, my darling!" exclaimed her mother, wiping away a few quiet tears, "I have nothing else to give you."

"Well, mamma, but you know I like it very much."

"Precious child," replied her mother, again tenderly pressing her to her bosom; "we all know your goodness, and the reluctance with which you ask anything that you fear might occasion us trouble. Dearest life, it will be the memory of these glimpses of angelic goodness that will wring our hearts when you are——" She paused, for the words had been uttered unconsciously.

"Yes," said her father, "they will console us, my child, and make your memory smell sweet, and blossom from the very dust. You have probably heard of the beautiful sentiment so exquisitely delineated by the great painter—'I too have been in Arcadia,'—and will it not be something to us to be able to say,—'We too have an angel in paradise!'"

Her sister brought her a cup of cold water, with which, after thanking her with a sweet smile, she merely wet her lips. "Alas! I am very troublesome to you all, but I shall not long——"

"Darling sister," said Emily, tenderly kissing her, "do not speak so; you are too good, and ever were so. Ah! Maria," she exclaimed, gushing into tears, "is it come to this at last!"

The sick girl placed her hand affectionately upon her cheek, and said—"Dear, dear sister, how I love you! Oh! how I love you all! and papa, my dear papa, how I pity you in your sorrow!"

"Thanks, my darling, I know that your heart is pervaded and sustained by all tenderness and affection; and indeed it is a consolation that since calamity has come upon us, it has fallen upon a family of love—of love to which it only gives greater strength and tenderness. This is a great blessing, my children, and we ought to feel deeply thankful for it. But, at the same time, it matters not what we suffer, we must allow nothing in this world of trial to shake our trust in God. Here, however, is our poor little messenger. Well, Edward, any letter?"

"Oh, yes, papa; there is one from Matilda. I know her writing."

He then handed the letter to his father, and immediately going over to his sick sister, he placed a slice of bread and butter in her hand, adding, "The head-constable of police gave it to me; I would have refused it though—but for Maria."

"Did you eat none of it yourself, Edward?" asked Maria.

"No," he replied, "I thought mamma might make you up some light nice thing out of it."

"But I cannot eat it, my dear Ned; divide it as you wish, but thank you, darling, from my heart, for thinking of me."

He then would have shared it as equally as he could among them, but to himself and his brother it was left; the others, from a feeling which may easily be understood, declined to partake of it.

We do not, of course, give this as a general picture of the distress which was felt; but we do give it as a picture which was by no means rare among the established clergy at the period of which we write. We know, from the best authority, that the privations of the time were frequently so severe as to find many families without food to eat.

Their daughter's letter was touching and simple, but unfortunately it contained not the remittance they expected; a circumstance which, in their condition, was such a disappointment as cannot well be described. She stated that, in consequence of the absence from home, for some days, of the family with whom she lived, it was out of her power to send them the full amount of her first quarter's salary as she had intended, or any money at all, as they knew she had none except her salary to send. She wrote, however, lest they might think or suppose for a moment that she had forgotten them. She sent her warmest love and affection to them all, especially to Maria, whom she hoped her letter would find better. Here she mentioned them all by name, and concluded by saying, that the moment the family returned home, she would remit to her dear papa the amount of her whole quarter's salary.

The youngsters all burst into tears, the fact being that they had not tasted food for more than eighteen hours. The mother, worn and pale with anxiety and distress, turned sorrowfully to her husband and said: "Charles, what is to be done? must our children die? must they perish with famine?"

"Send Charles over to M'Mahon's," replied her husband; "he is poor, it is true, but he is our next neighbor, and from him, if he will oblige us, relief will come soonest. Charles, go, my child, and ask Con M'Mahon if he will be good enough to send me a stone or two of potatoes for a few days; and I will feel obliged—your brother, poor child, is fatigued by his journey to the post-office, and from other causes—or being the elder I would make him go—if M'Mahon obliges me, tell him that I will thank him to send them, as I have no messenger to fetch them. I have always found poor M'Mahon respectful and neighborly, and I am certain he will not refuse us."

We shall not detail the distressing and melancholy conversation, in which they were

engaged until the child's return. It is enough to say that, although he met with no refusal, the expected relief was not sent. "Well, my child," inquired his anxious father, "what reply did he give?"

"He said, papa," returned the child, "that he would give you a whole sack of potatoes with pleasure, but that, to send them in the open day, would be more than his life is worth—he dare not do it."

The old man looked up, then clasping his hands together, and glancing at his unhappy family, a few bitter tears rolled down his cheeks.

"But," added the boy, "he said he would bring over as many as he could carry, about twelve o'clock to-night."

"Well," continued his father, "that is civil; and I believe, as to the danger, he is right. But, in the meantime, what is to be done? I fear all the available sources of relief have been already exhausted, with the exception of heaven alone—in which, my children, we must not permit anything to shake our trust. I am feeble, but yet I must go forth and try to secure some food for you, my poor famishing family: hold up, then, my dear children, even for a little, for certain I am that God will provide for us still."

He was, accordingly, upon the point of going out, when John Purcel entered; and as the object of his visit is already known to the reader, we shall leave to his imagination the sense of the relief which it afforded.

This now is not an overdrawn picture of particular cases—and they were numerous—which occurred during the period of what was termed the Tithe Rebellion.

The circumstance of the message to M'Mahon's, however, was the cause of a scene which we could not possiby omit, in a work treating of this peculiar and most distressing crisis. As the boy Charles was on his way to M'Mahon's—and this he mentioned to the family afterwards—he was met, he said, by a gentleman dressed in rusty black, mounted upon a strong, coarse horse; and who, after looking at him with a good deal of surprise, said—"What is your name, my fine fellow?" and on hearing it he asked him where he was going. The child, who had been trained to nothing but truth; mentioned at once the object of his message; upon which the gentleman in question, after having heard it, thrust his hands into his smallclothes pocket, and then drew them out with an air of impatience, exclaiming—"Bad luck to it for poverty—it's the curse o' the counthry." Now this worthy priest, for such he was, had not been many weeks in the parish at the period of his meeting *with the* little boy; and it so happened, that his residence was within about a quarter of a mile of the glebe house. He was, besides, one of the few who had given, upon more than one occasion, rather unequivocal manifestations of violent opposition to the whole system of tithes. As a matter of course, he was the last individual from whom anything like sympathy for those who suffered in such a cause might be expected. Much of the same character was M'Mahon, to whom the distressed parson had applied for the humble loan of food. He assailed, in fact, the whole Establishment, and took both an active and conspicuous part in the excitement which then agitated the country. He joined the crowds, vociferated and shouted among them at the top of his lungs, and took the liberty of laying down the law on the subject, as he termed it: that is to say, of swearing that one stick or stone of their dirty Establishment should not be left upon another, but that the whole bobbery of it must be sent to blazes—where it would all go yet, plaise God. Of course his neighbor, the parson, was by no means cognizant of this violence on the part of M'Mahon, or he would never have thought of applying to him, even under the severest pressure of absolute destitution.

Having premised thus much concerning these two individuals, we request our readers to accompany us to the house of the Rev. Anthony Casey, and to suppose that it is a little after the hour of eleven o'clock at night. The worthy gentleman and his curate had just seated themselves in his snug, but humble little parlor, where a pleasant turf fire was beginning to get somewhat dim, when the following dialogue occurred between them:

"Pether," said Father Anthony to his curate, who had just returned from a sick call, "you found the night bitther, I think?"

"It is very cold, indeed, sir."

"You have had a long ride of it upon that mountain road, without even a bush to shelther you."

"It is not less than fourteen miles I think," replied the curate, "and a cold, desolate road as I ever travelled."

"You have read your office?"

"I have, sir."

"You have discharged your duty to that poor, sick widow?"

"I hope so, sir."

"And you have ridden under a severe night, along a naked road, a distance of fourteen miles?"

"I have, sir."

"And you feel your mind aisy, and your conscience at rest?"

"I can say so with truth, thank God," replied the curate.

"Well, then, in that case," proceeded the kind-hearted priest, "I think you had better take a tumbler of punch: it will comfort you, and make you sleep like a top."

"Thank you, sir," replied the curate, "I am much obliged to you; but I don't require it—I have no particular wish for it."

"But I tell you, man alive, that it will do you good; and lest you might feel solitary, I think I will take one with you, merely to keep you in countenance;—here Katty!"

Katty, a complacent, kind-looking woman, somewhat past the middle period of life, then made her appearance. "Well, your reverence?"

"Get hot water and tumblers—Father Pether is starved after his long ride such a night, and must have a tumbler of punch to warm him, poor fellow, and I am going to keep him in countenance; and see, Katty, bring the poteen that's in Ould Broadbottom, at the right-hand side o' the cubbard. Stir the fire a little, Pether, and throw on a sod or two—it's getting dull."

This was complied with; and Father Peter observed, after he had trimmed the grate a little:—

"The country, sir, is in a frightful state. This tithe rebellion is quite general. On my way out to Drumfurrar and home again, I met large crowds on the roads, cold as the night is; and on speaking to, and remonstrating with them, upon meeting and being abroad at such hours, they desired me to mind my own business, and allow them to mind theirs. The country is literally alive with them night and day."

"Very well," replied Father Anthony, "let them work out their own purposes, provided they keep within the limits of the law. You know the Established Church is nothing else than an English garrison to support and keep alive British interests in this country; but the people are going the right way to work; for I tell you, Pether, that, by strictly observing the doctrine of passive resistance, they will starve the same garrison clane and clear out o' the country. And won't that be a great day for Ireland, Pether?"

"Yes, sir, no doubt of it; but in the meantime the unfortunate parsons are suffering dreadfully: many of them are starving literally, and it is those who have not hoarded up the mammon of unrighteousness, but have been charitable and benevolent to the poor, who are now suffering most."

"Ay, faith, that's not a bad thought, Pether; but I tell you the mammon of unrighteousness is by no means a bad thing. We may say as we will, we priests and parsons, but I say to you, what is a man worth in this world without money? Not a thraneen. A complete nonenity, and sorra a thing else. And whisper, Pether; what is the starving of the parsons to us? They had the fat an' marrow of the land long enough, and I think it's full time that we should come in for a lick at last. Think of you or I living to see ourselves rolling about in a rich carriage, with a lump of a mithre, like a pair of ass's ears stuck together, painted on the outride of it, and we waiting, and drinkin' of the best. Arra, salvation to me, but the prospect's a born beauty, so it is, and will be rayalized yet, plaise God."

"Too much wealth, sir, is an enemy to religion."

"Well, Pether, that may be so occasionally; but here's your health, and in the meantime, I didn't care that some of us had a little more of it. I would have given a pound-note today to have had five shillings about me; and sorra testher I had in my company."

"You must have been pretty closely pressed for cash, when you would have given such a premium."

"Troth, then, I was; and when the poor boy mentioned whose son he was, and when I saw his little delicate feet without shoes, and heard his story—mammon of unrighteousness! devil a thing in life aiquil to it. It enables a man to do the practical good, and not satisfy himself or escape with empty words."

"They say our neighbor here, Mr. Goodison, is very ill off."

"Well, I dare say he's not on the top of the wheel; however, as I said, what's their starvation to us? If it was laid upon them for their sins, do you think it would be right in us to intherfare and set ourselves against Providence?—blessed be His name."

"Well, I must confess," replied his amiable curate, "that I was not prepared for such an argument as that from *you*. You know we ought to love our enemies."

"Very well," replied Father Anthony; "I have no objection to love our enemies, provided they feed themselves. But surely to love and feed them is rather too much of a good thing."

During this brief dialogue they had mixed each his tumbler of punch, and after a pause of some minutes, during which the hard-hearted parish priest sighed deeply as he looked into the fire, he exclaimed—

"You know, Pether, that I am opposed to a Protestant Established Church in this country; and you know, besides, that I have gone farther in this tithe affair than most of my brethren, and on that account I hope you are not surprised at my opinions. Starve them out's my maxim. But still, afther all, salvation to me, but it's a trying case to be

without food, and above all, to see your own children—"

"My own children," exclaimed the curate, with a smile.

"Ay, Pether," proceeded this benevolent hypocrite, forgetting everything but the image that was before him—"Ay, in troth, your own children—your own children, poor things, without a morsel to put into their mouths; and your wife, Pether, that you love betther than—than—aye, than a station dinner, a thousand times—sittin' with a pale face and a breaking, or, maybe, a broken heart, looking on at their privations and their miserable destitution, without being able to render them the laist assistance. Bad luck to it, for a mammon of unrighteousness, it's never in the way when it's wanted."

After he had concluded, he took out a red cotton pocket-handkerchief, spotted at equal distances with white dice, and wiped away the tears that had gushed to his eyes whilst he spoke.

"Pether," said he, immediately, "finish your tumbler and go to bed; you know we must be off to-morrow to station before six o'clock, and after your bitther ride to-night you want rest, poor fellow."

When about a quarter of an hour had elapsed, and he had seen Peter to bed, he went to the kitchen, and asked Katty, his housekeeper, who always attended upon him and his curate, if she had done what he desired her,

"It's done, your reverence," she replied, "but you'll never be able to carry it."

"That's not your affair, Katty—do you hear now?"

"I do, your reverence."

"Very well, then, I tell you that's none of your affair,—the sorra bit. I hope you did'nt let Barney go to bed?"

"Of coorse not, sir, when you bid me keep him up."

"Very well, then; and if either he or you brathe a syllable of this to Father Pether, I'll read you both *out*—do you hear that now? Bring Barney here, then."

Barney accordingly made his appearance.

"Now mark me," continued the priest, "if either of you ever brathes a syllable of this, salvation to me, but I'll read you both out from the althar. Here now help me on with this sack; it's for a distressed person in the neighborhood that wants it badly, as you may judge, or I wouldn't be trudging off with it at this hour of the night. Katty, you go to bed, and let Barney stay up till I come back—did you mind my words, I repate—read you both out, if ever a syllable comes to Father Pether's ears, or anybody's else's but our own."

The servant man accordingly assisted him to raise upon his stout and honest shoulders a short heavy bag of oatmeal, into which he had thrust a large flitch of newly-hung bacon; and thus loaded, the violent anti-tithe priest bent his way, nearly at the hour of twelve o'clock, to the residence of the Rev. Mr. Goodison, his neighbor.

It is necessary to state here, that the glebe-house of that gentleman was situated within about two hundred yards of two cross-roads, one of which went by the gate of entrance to it. After a severe trudge, during a night that began now to brighten as the moon rose, Father Anthony found himself approaching the cross-roads in question, and for a moment imagined that he saw his own shadow before him, an impression which soon changed on observing that the shadow, or whatever it was, although loaded much as he himself was, that is to say, with a sack on his shoulders, evidently approached him—a circumstance which he knew to be an impossibility, and that it must, consequently, be a distinct individual. Having satisfied himself of this, he got under the shade of a hedge, a movement in which he was instantly imitated by the stranger. Each stood concealed for some time, with a hope that the other might advance and turn probably out of his way; but neither seemed disposed to move. At length, Father Anthony gave a kind of inquisitive, dry cough, by way of experiment, which was instantly responded to by another cough equally dry and mysterious. These were repeated two or three times without success, when at last Father Anthony advanced a little under shadow of the hedge, and found as before that the strange individual did the same; and thus, in fact, they kept gradually coughing at each other and approaching until they fairly met face to face, each with a sack upon his shoulders.

"Con M'Mahon!" exclaimed the priest, "why, what on earth brought you out at this hour of the night, and—aisy, what is this you're carrying?"

"Faix, your reverence," replied the other, "I might as well ask yourself the same two questions."

"I know you might," said Father Anthony; "but in the manetime you had better not."

The priest spoke like one whose wind had not been improved by the burthen he carried; and M'Mahon, anxious if possible to get rid of him, determined to enter into some conversation that might tire out his strength. He consequently selected the topic of the day as being best calculated for that purpose.

"Isn't these blessed times that's coming,

plaise your reverence," said M'Mahon, "when we'll be done wid these tithes, and have the millstone taken from our necks altogether?"

This was spoken in a most wheedling and insinuating tone replete with the the confidence of one who knew that the stronger he spoke the more satisfaction he would give his auditor, and the more readily he would avert any suspicion as to his object and appearance at such an hour.

"Yes," returned the priest, giving his burthen an uneasy twitch, "we have had too weighty a load upon our shoulders this many a day, and the devil's own predicament it is to be overburthened with anything—we all know that."

"Sorra doubt of it," replied the other, easing himself as well as he could by a corresponding hitch; "but it's one comfort to myself anyhow, that I done my duty against the same tithes—an' bad luck to them!"

"If you did your duty, you weren't without a good example, at all events," replied the priest; "I taught you how to hate the accursed impost—but at the same time, you know I always told you to make a distinction between the tithes and the—hem——"

"An' what, your reverence?"

"Hem—why you know, Con, that we're commanded to love our enemies, and it was upon *this* ground that I always taught you to make a distinction, as I say, between the tithes and the parsons themselves. And by the way, now, I don't know but it would be our duty," he proceeded, "to render the same parsons, now that they're suffering, as much good for evil as possible. It would be punishing the thieves by heaping, as the Scripture says, coals of fire upon their heads."

"And do you think, your reverence," replied the other, who was too quick of apprehension not to suspect what the priest was driving at, "do you think that I have been so long listening to your advice, not to know that such a coorse was my duty?"

"That's the way," continued the priest, "to punish them like a Christian."

"Ay, to punish them, your reverence, as you say—an' in troth, I'm the man myself that 'ud go any length to do it."

"But where are you bound to now, Con, and what—ahem—what is that you are carrying?" asked the priest.

"Why then, it's the butt-end of a sack o' praties," replied Con, giving an answer only to the easiest side of the query.

"Well, but who are you bringing them to?" he asked again, "because, thank God, there's not much poverty in this neighborhood at present."

"Well, then, God forgive me!" replied the other, concealing his benevolence by a grin, whice he could not prevent at his own ingenuity, but which he endeavored to conceal as well as he could; "God forgive me! but hearin' that Goodison the parson here, and his family were in great distress, I thought I might as well have my revenge aginst him, by fetchin' him a lock o' praties, which is all I can spare the poor ould—hem—the heretical ould creature—and so, says I to myself, it's a good opportunity of heapin' the coals upon him that you spoke about, sir. And upon my conscience, as far as a good weighty butt o' praties goes, I'll punish him this very night."

The priest gave a short hiccup or two, as if laboring under some momentary affection of the throat, which soon extended to the eyes, for with some difficulty he put up his naked hand and wiped away a kind of moisture, that in ordinary cases would have very much resembled tears.

"Ah, I see, Con!" he said, after clearing his throat a little, "you had a grudge against him like myself, and you determined to—ay—just so—you see, Con, here's the way of it; he didn't visit me yet since I came to the parish—do you understand?—and I tell you, flesh or blood couldn't overlook such a slight; so I'm glad, at all events, that you had the spirit to follow my advice—for the truth is, I'm goin' to have my revenge as well as yourself; but when one does take his revenge, Con, it's always best to take it like a Christian. So now that we understand one another, let us go up to the glebe—otherwise I'll drop.—However, salvation to me!" he exclaimed with a smile, "if we'll bear their burthens much longer! I have a butt of meal here, I saw his son to-day, too, without a stitch to his foot, poor boy."

"And so did I," replied M'Mahon; "he sent one o' them over to me for the loan of a lock o' praties."

"Oh, God help them!" exclaimed the priest. "Come, Con, let us hurry—but why didn't you send them *then?*"

"Why, sir—why, bekaise I daren't send them in open daylight."

"True enough," said the other; "and it was stupid of me to ask. I myself would have sent what I'm carrying to him by Barney Brennan, but that I feared it would take wind, in which case the people might withdraw their confidence from me, from an apprehension that I wanted to curry favor with the parson of the parish, which I assure you, Condy, I do not. But listen to me, now; you're never to brathe a syllable of this adventure."

"I'll give you my oath of it, sir, if you wish, takin' it for granted, at the same time, that I'm safe with you."

"Never fear that; I'm not the man to play the traitor on any poor fellow that I might catch at any illegal work of the kind."

Both were now within a few perches of the hall-door, when the priest, who was scarcely able to speak from fatigue, said with some difficulty:—

"Con, as we have met, I think you must take the responsibility of this night's adventure on yourself. Here, now," said he, depositing his burden against the door as he spoke, "I think the best thing to do, in order to spare their feelings—for I need not tell you, that they are, by all accounts, a delicately-minded and highly-educated family—and it will be well to tax them as little as possible; I say then, let us place these sacks against the hall-door, and as soon as it is opened, they will tumble in heels foremost upon them, and then you can cut. So now I leave you to manage it, only, on any earthly account, don't name me to a living soul in the business. Good night, now, and God bless you—as He will," he added, retreating from the hall-door—"as He will, you kind-hearted, good-natured ringleader you."

The matter, however, did not end here, for, as Burns says, "the best-laid schemes of mice and men may gang aglee." The aid received by the venerable Mr. Goodison and his family had escaped through the children, in the early part of the next day, and had spread through the neighborhood; and sooth to say, there was scarcely a voice among them louder in condemnation of the fact than that of Con M'Mahon, who said it was a bad way to banish tithes by assistin' the parsons. So far as he was concerned, however, the secret did not at all transpire. His reverence, however, was by no means so fortunate. The next morning, he and his curate were under the necessity of holding a station in a distant part of the parish. Father Anthony, however, feeling himself fatigued by his burthen of the preceding night, sent the curate on before him, with an assurance that he would follow him in an hour or two. He accordingly did so, but, with his usual inattention to dress, was seen the next morning, about ten o'clock, riding along the public road—which was a great thoroughfare—towards the locality of the station, with the history of the previous night's transaction written as clearly on his back as if it had been labelled there in large and legible print. The truth is, the humane and charitable priest had neglected to get his coat brushed—an operation which it never underwent unless on a Sunday morning—and the consequence was, that whilst the front part of his dress was tolerably black, the back part of it would have done credit to the coat of a miller. The sagacity of the people was not for a moment at fault. Both circumstances were immediately connected; his reverence's secret took wind, and before the expiration of forty-eight hours was known to the whole parish.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mogue Moylan's Anxiety for the Safety of the Purcel's—Tithe Distraint—Massacre of Carrickshock—Good News for Mr. Temple.

Matters had now arrived at such a crisis, that either the law must be vindicated, or tithes should be considered as put down by violence on the one hand, and passive resistance on the other; for, as the question stood, it had to grapple with both. The clergymen of the establishment, cramped by poverty, and harassed by delay, were not now in a condition to recover their incomes by the tedious and expensive processes that were hitherto resorted to. Some point, however, was made, or some antiquated statute was ferretted out, owing to the black-letter craft of certain astute lawyers, by which the parson or proctor, we believe, as the case might have been, instead of being forced to incur enormous expense for the recovery of any individual responsibility, was enabled, through what was termed a Writ of Rebellion, to join the greater part of a parish, if not the whole of it, in the same legal process, by inserting their names in the writ.

At first, however, and in the early stage of the proceedings, the resistance was by no means passive. Experience, however, soon taught the people that the law and the executive, when opposed, were anything but playthings, and the loss of several lives on the part of those who attempted, by force, to obstruct the execution of the former, led to the expediency of adopting the passive plan. A widow's son had been shot in a tithe-levy; and on the other side, a clergyman named Ryder had fallen a victim to the outrage of the people—as, we believe, had other reverend gentlemen also, together with a tithe-proctor, who was shot in his own field in open day, his son, a boy of fifteen or sixteen, having also a narrow escape. Purcel's position was now one of extreme danger and difficulty. The combination against tithes had been carried to such a height, that not only were the people sworn to pay no tithes, but all the proctor's laborers were forced, besides, to quit his employment. No man

could work for him, unless at the certain risk of his life. By the mere influence of money, and the offer of triple wages, he succeeded in procuring a number of workmen from a neighboring county; but no sooner were they seen in his employment, than an immense crowd collected from all parts of the country, and after treating them with great violence, swore, every man of them, never to work for Purcel, or any other tithe-proctor whatever. This treatment exasperated the Purcels exceedingly; indeed, so much so, that they expressed to the people a wish that their house should be attacked, in order that they might thereby have an opportunity of shooting the assailants like dogs. In this way the feeling ran on between them day by day, until the acrimony and thirst for vengeance, on each side, had reached its utmost height.

In the meantime, a tithe auction was to take place at a distance of some three or four miles from the Proctor's. On the morning when it was to take place, Mogue Moylan told Alick Purcel that he wished to speak to him. This scoundrel's plausibility was such, that he had continued to act the spy and traitor in the family, without exciting suspicion in the mind of any one, with the exception only of Jerry Joyce, who being himself involved in Whiteboyism, was placed in a position of great difficulty and danger. To have discovered Mogue's treachery, would not only criminate himself, by the necessity of admitting his connection with this illegal combination, which was a felony at the time, but it would also have probably occasioned the loss of his life, by betraying the designs of his confederacy, and thus proving himself, as it would have been termed, a traitor to the people, and to the cause of his country. Such, in truth, are the multifarious evils that result from illegal conspiracies among our impulsive and unreasoning countryman.

"It's a word or two I'd wish to spake to you, Mr. Alick."

"Well, Mogue, what's the matter? Are you still determined to be hard-hearted to poor Letty Lenehan?"

"That I may never sup sorrow, Mr. Alick, if I can help the foolish creature! I do all I can to let her see that we are not aiquils; but the thoughtless girl won't be convinced. I belong to a family, sir, that always suffered for our counthry. Widin the last six hundre' years, I have it from sound authority, that there never was a ruction on Irish ground that wasn't the manes of havin' some o' them hanged or transported, glory be to God! An' you know, Mr. Alick, that's a proud boast, an' what every one couldn't say."

"All I can say then, Mogue, is, that if you look upon that as an honor, I have no objection that the fate should follow the family, and, I suppose, neither have you."

"Well, indeed now, and that I may never die in sin, but I think it an honor to oppose these Sassanagh laws; an', for that matther, to die opposin' them; however, as to myself, Mr. Alick, I am by nature of a peaceable, quiet turn, and not likely—"

"To grace a gibbet, Mogue: well, I believe not; but what is this you wish to say to me?"

"One or two things then, sir. First, I hear that Mr. M'Carthy is comin' down to stay wid the family here, bekaise they say it's going to be attacked."

"Well, is it not both a friendly and a manly offer for him to make?"

"Granted, Mr. Alick; but instead of helpin' you all to keep the danger off, he'll only be the manes of bringin' it on; for as soon as it becomes known that he's here, there will be ten enemies then for one there is now against you. I happened to overhear a discoorse at the chapel on Sunday last; and it's from that I'm givin' you my advice."

"I don't care a d—n," said the impetuous young man, "about their discourses at chapel. They go there more for the purpose of plotting murders, and entering into illegal combinations, than for that of praying sincerely or worshipping God! No; we despise and defy them."

"Well, then, Mr.——"

"Silence, Mogue; not another word on that subject. I am obliged to you, in the meantime, for you kindness, and the interest you feel for us."

"That my bed may be made in heaven, thin, but I do feel all you say; and why shouldn't I? But I said I had a thing or two to mention, an' although it goes against my heart to say it, still I like your family too well, not to throw you out a hint upon it. 'Tis regardin' Jerry Joyce, ay—an' Mr. M'Carthy too, sir."

"Jerry Joyce and M'Carthy; well, what about them? Jerry's a rollicking shallow fool, but honest, I think."

"Well, Mr. Alick, this is to be buried between you and me. I say, don't trust him; an' as for M'Carthy, it doesn't become the likes o' me to disparage him; but if there's not a traitor to this family in his coat, I'm not here. It's purty well known that he's a Whiteboy; he *was* a caravat it seems, two years agone, and was wid ould *Paudeen Gar* when Hanly was hanged for——"

"And who was Paudeen Gar?" asked the other, interrupting him.

"He was the head o' the Shanavests, and it so happened, that one Hanly, who was head of the Moyle Rangers, as they wor called, was hanged only for burnin' the house of a man that tuck a farm over another man's head. Now the Shanavests and the Moyle Rangers, you see, bein' bittther enemies, the Shanavests prosecuted Hanly for the burning, and on the day of his execution, Paudeen Gar stayed under the gallows, and said he wouldn't lave the place till he'd see the caravat* put about Hanly's neck; an' from that out the Moyle Rangers was never called anything but Caravats."

"But what does Shanavest mean?"

"It manes an ould waistcoat; that is, it's the Irish for an ould waistcoat, and Paudeen Gar's men were called Shanavests, bekaise when they went out to swear the people against tithes and priests' dues, they put ould waistcoats about them for fraid o' bein' known."

"And you tell me that M'Carthy's a Whiteboy?"

"Wasn't he a night wid them? and didn't he come home in the mornin' wid his face blackened?"

"Well, but he accounted very satisfactorily for that."

"I'm a friend to your family, Mr. Alick; and what I tell you is thrue; an' by the same token, Miss Julia isn't safe in the one house wid him."

"Come, come, Mogue, don't attempt to make any illusion of that kind. You are an honest but over-anxious fool, and like many a one in this world, would make mountains out of mole-hills."

"Well, sir," replied Mogue, somewhat downcast, "when the time comes I'll let you know why I say so. Don't trust eithier o' them, I say, *for the present*, at any rate; for I hope soon to know more about them."

"Well, then, Mogue," said Alick, laughing, "I'll keep my eye on them."

"Do so, sir; an' as I'm spakin' to you as a friend that you *may* trust, I tell you, Mr. Alick, that although I'm quiet, as I said a while agone, still as there's likely to be danger to your family, I'd wish to help you to meet it, and to do whatever little I could in your defence—I would, indeed; but you know, Mr. Alick, I can't do that so long as I'm kept sleepin' in the out-houses. If I was allowed any kind of a shake-down *in* the house, I could do a good deal in the way of assistance. I could help you to load your fire-arms, or I could take charge of the ladies, and many other thing that I couldn't do out o' the house, so that was all I had to say to you, Mr. Alick."

"Thank you, Mogue; I really feel obliged to you; and I shall think over what you have said to me. If we admit any stranger to sleep in the house, with the exception of Mr. M'Carthy, you shall be the man; I will promise you that much, conditionally."

"And not a word of what I hinted about Jerry?"

"You need not be at all uneasy on that score; as I said, I shall keep my eye on him. We must now go to prepare for this auction, which of course, so far as we are concerned, will be both an unpleasant and unprofitable affair. Go, then, and get the horses. We have also some processes to serve, and it will be necessary that we should see the bailiffs, to give them proper instructions, and directions to the houses on which they are to serve them."

"Is Mr. O'Driscol goin' wid you, sir?"

"No, Mogue," replied Alick, laughing, "ever since the country has *risen*, as he calls it, Mr. O'Driscol has lost his health. Indeed, ever since the day he was attacked at Philpot's Corner, by the four black faces, a fact which he has dignified with the name of insurrection, he has taken no active part in public life. He does nothing now but correspond with his friend the Castle, as he says."

The morning on which this conversation took place was a dull, gloomy one, about the middle of December. It did not rain, but the weather had been dark and desolate in character for above a week before; in fact, of that cheerless description which represses animal spirits, and superinduces upon the mind impressions that are dreary and disheartening.

A chief constable of police, accompanied by a body of forty men well armed, started from near the proctor's house, in order to execute a decree of the Court of Chancery, or rather to protect those who were about to do so, by first holding an auction, and serving a process from the same court afterwards, in another place. For the first mile or so there was not much notice taken of them; a few boys only, and some women, kept hooting and screaming at their heels as they went along. Within about two miles or so of the place of their destination, men began to appear upon the hills in increasing groups, and horns were soon sounding in every direction. This, however, was not all; on reaching a chapel, the bell began to ring, and, in a short time, as they advanced, the bells of the whole country around them were pealing rapidly and with violence. The crowds now began to coalesce, and to gather about them in such a manner that they kept them completely hemmed in; and in this manner

* Carvat; fact—such is their origin.

they proceeded, until they arrived at the premises on which the auction was to be held. The peasantry were formidably armed with every sort of weapon that the moment could supply; for, on such occasions as this, the people never used fire-arms. These, carried in the open day, might enable the police to know the persons of those who illegally possessed them, and, consequently, get such individuals into trouble. Their arms, on this occasion, consisted of pitchforks, spades, shovels, scythes, bill-hooks, and heavy sticks, whilst it was observed that several of those who carried these weapons in one hand, carried a round, destructive stone about two or three pounds' weight, in the other. A powerful man, who wore a sash across his shoulders, and a military cap that was peaked so as to conceal his face, appeared as leader, and seemed completely to direct and regulate their motions. The state of tumult throughout and over the face of the country was indeed frightful, and it is very likely that a chief constable and only forty police felt the danger of their position and the utter inadequacy of their numbers, either to carry the decrees of the law into execution, or to defend themselves, with anything like success, against the burning ferocity of the armed multitudes by whom they were surrounded.

At length the auction commenced, and the first article put up for competition was a fine heifer, but not an individual present would open his lips to bid for her; and, on a little further examination, it was ascertained that all the cattle had been branded with the word TITHE, in large and legible characters. The family on whom the execution was about being levied, walked about at their ease, and rather seemed to enjoy the matter, as a triumph over law, than as a circumstance that was calculated to depress or annoy them. They offered no obstruction; neither did they, on the other hand, afford the slightest possible facility to the officers of the law. They were strictly and to the letter passive.

The heifer alluded to having been put aside for want of a bidder, a fine cow was put up, and all the usual cajoling and seductive provocations to competition and purchase were held out, but in vain. Every flourish of the bailiff, who acted as auctioneer, was lost, as it were, on empty space, and might as well have been uttered in a desert. Butter-casks, kitchen vessels, and everything on which the impress could be affixed, was marked with the hated brand of "*tithe.*" No one, however, would bid; and when the bailiffs, on seeing that none present was either willing or courageous enough to do so, began to bid themselves, the silence of the people still remained unbroken. They then put up some furniture, all of which was branded "*tithe;*" but, on purchasing it for another market, they found that it was impossible to remove it, as neither horse nor cart, nor any available vehicle for that purpose, could be had at any cost. So far, therefore, the law and all its authority, supported besides by a large body of constabulary, were completely defeated, and it was obvious that, unless those on whom the perilous duty of executing it fell, came provided with the means of removing the property, that is to say, with horses, carts, and a body of military besides, every such auction must terminate in failure.

The shortness of the day, and the distance they had to go, when taken in connection with the ferocious state of the people, prevented the bailiffs and their protectors from serving the process, to which we have alluded, on another party. It was therefore determined on to abandon the property for the present, and execute the service on the following day.

The next morning opened with the same dull, dark, and desolute appearance, as did the preceding. On this occasion, as there was no auction to hold and but one process to serve, only a single bailiff was necessary. No diminution, however, was made in the number of police who attended; and, indeed, the party selected for the service of this day ought rather to have been increased, inasmuch as the bailiff in question had rendered himself so justly obnoxious to the people, that it was fatuity itself to suppose that, smarting as they were under the scoundrel's wanton and obscene insults, it was possible they would suffer him to escape. The party had, consequently, no sooner set out, than the horns once more began to blow, the bells to ring, and the whole country around to stir into tumult and action. The same arms as we have already mentioned were in requisition, with some old pike-handles, and an occasional rusty pike or two that may have seen service in '98.

On the previous day the people had resolved to maintain an armed neutrality, and to observe, unless attacked, the spirit of passive resistance in its strictest sense. Now, however, the man who, confiding in and abusing the protection and authority of the Court of Chancery, had so grossly insulted them by language that was both indecent and unchristian; who had not only attacked their want of morals, but ridiculed their religion;—this person, we say, was within their grasp, and let what might be the result, they were determined, to a man, "*to have the*

process-server or blood!" for such was the expression. The people now shouted, and had evidently made up their minds, not only to secure the process-server, but to attack the police themselves, at any risk. Such was the apprehension of this, that their officer deemed it necessary to halt his party, and order them to prime and load, which they did. Whilst they halted, so did the assailants; but, upon resuming their march to the house of the tithe-defaulter, the crowds, who were every moment increasing in number and in fury, resumed their march also, gradually closing upon and coming nearly into contact with them. Indeed, they were now so close, that the object of all this preparation, and concert, and motion, could be distinctly ascertained from their language and demeanor. Ever and anon there arose from them, extending far and wide over the country, one general cry and exclamation, accompanied by menacing gestures and blazing eyes:—"*The process-server or Blood!—Butler or blood!*"

This unfortunate individual, having put a copy of the process under the door, took his place in the centre of the police, who turned to the left of the house for the purpose of retreating; and it is to be deplored that the retreat in question was not conducted with more discipline and judgment.

On this occasion, as well as on that of the preceding day, the same person who acted as the popular leader was present, dressed as before, in a sash, and peaked cap that concealed the greater portion of his countenance, which was, besides, otherwise disguised. On arriving at the defaulter's house, this man took off his sash, lest it might make him a more conspicuous object for the police, in case of a recounter, and put it into his pocket, from which one end of it, however, protruded. Two other leaders held subordinate rank under him, a circumstance which gave to the whole proceedings a character of premeditated concert and deliberation.

From the house of the defaulter, the police, encircling the process-server, proceeded in a certain direction to a place called Tennison's Gate; but so closely were they now pressed upon by the multitude that they were obliged to keep them off with their bayonets. Their threats, their increasing numbers, and their irrepressible fury, now excited such alarm in the minds of the police, that one of them, calling to his officer, entreated him to take them into the open field, where alone their arms could afford them protection; or if not, he added, that they must fall a sacrifice to the vengeance of their enemies. At that instant, two or three of the leaders of the people were in communication with that gentleman, one of them resting his hand upon his horse's neck, and the other so close to him that his words could be distinctly heard.

"Captain G———s," said the latter, "don't be afraid—meek yourself aisy—not a hair of your head, nor any of the police, will be touched; we only want the process-server; let him be given up, and you will be safe."

"Sooner than give him up to you," he replied, "we will, every man of us, part with our lives. Sacrifice us you may, but we will never surrender our charge."

Instead, however, of following the sound advice of one of his own men, the chief constable, credulous to infatuation, allowed the infuriated body, by which he and his men were surrounded, still to press in upon him, without taking those precautions which common sense, coolness, and the insecurity of his position, should have dictated.

By the time they had passed the place called Tennison's Gate, a large body had collected in their front, blocking up the road they had to pass, and which would have conducted them in a different direction, but not one so peculiarly perilous. From this they made a turn to the left into a lane that would have led them back again to a little village, through which they had already passed, the bell of which was already sounding their death-knell. The constabulary, by turning into the narrow lane at the left, unconsciously approached the very ambush into which the people, or rather their more disciplined leaders, had intended to decoy them. This lane was enclosed by walls, and on one side the ground was considerably elevated and covered with stones, thus affording to their assailants every possible opportunity of completing their destruction. The unfortunate men were pressed by a crowd on their right, composed of those who occupied the elevation; another crowd pressed upon their rear; whilst a third body obstructed them in front, thus keeping them pent up, and at the mercy of the crowds on every side.

It is quite obvious that the person in command of the constabulary was not only unfit for his duty, but ignorant of anything like military discipline or manœuvring. He must have completely lost his presence of mind, otherwise his easiness of belief and simplicity are utterly unaccountable. As it was, in two or three minutes after the hollow assurances of good-will uttered by those whom he saw bristling at the same time with vengeance about him, an effort was made by a man to drag the unfortunate process-server out of the lines. He was immediately pulled back by a policeman, but was scarcely restored to

his place, when he was struck on the side of the head with a wattle. The blow caused him to stagger, and would have caused him to fall, but that he was seized and kept upon his legs by the policeman. He had not time, however, to recover his steadiness, when he was felled to the ground by a blow from a stone, which sent him to the ground a corpse. A general assault with every description of rude and formidable weapons, now commenced upon the unfortunate constabulary. Their imbecile and uncautious officer fired his pistol, and in a moment afterwards was knocked from his horse and instantly put to death. The crowd now rushed on them from all sides, and so sharp, short, and decisive was the massacre, that in about the space of two minutes, twelve men lay butchered on the spot.

Other scenes of violence and bloodshed there were, but none so frightful as the above. Most persons remember Rathcormac and Newtonbarry, but we do not imagine that a recapitulation of such atrocities can be at all agreeable to the generality of our readers, and for this reason we content ourselves with barely alluding to them, as a corroboration of the disorganized condition of society which then existed, and which we are now attempting to describe.

But perhaps nothing, after all, can test the inextinguishable hatred of tithes which prevailed at that period, more than the startling and almost incredible fact that the government, aided by as sound a lawyer, and as able an attorney-general as ever lived, and a powerful bar besides, were not able, during the following spring and summer assizes, to convict a single individual concerned in this massacre, which is now a portion of our country's history, and still well remembered as that of Carrickshock, in the county of Kilkenny.

This double triumph of the people over the tithe and police, created a strong sensation throughout the kingdom, and even shook the two houses of parliament with dismay.

Indeed, there probably never existed in Ireland, any combination or confederacy of the people so bitter, or with such a deeply-rooted hold upon the popular mind as that against tithes, as it slumbered and revived from time to time. And what is rather singular, too, the frequent agitations arising from it, which in its periodical returns convulsed the country, were almost uniformly, or at least very frequently, productive of a collateral one against priests' dues. Up until the year '31, however, or '32, the agitators against tithes were more for their reduction than their extinction. The reduction of tithes and priests' dues went, as we have said, very frequently together, or rather the one generally produced the other. The Threshers, in their early existence, were as active in their attempts to diminish the income of the priests by intimidation, as they were that of the parson. Their plan was, with white shirts over their clothes, and white handkerchiefs round their hats so as to conceal the features, to pay a nightly visit to some quiet and timid man, whom they swore, on pain of death, to visit the neighboring chapel in order to inform the priest, in the face of his own congregation, that unless he reduced the fees for marriage to half-a-guinea, those of baptism to nineteen-pence half-penny, and celebrate Mass for thirteen pence, he might prepare his coffin. If he got hay and oats for his horse at a station, he was at liberty to take them, but if not, he was to depart quietly, on pain of smarting for it. The unfortunate individuals on whom they imposed this painful and dangerous duty, were much to be pitied whilst this confederacy lasted. To submit to an illegal oath, without reporting the matter to the next magistrate, was a capital felony, as it was voluntarily to execute any of their criminal behests. If, then, the unfortunate individual pitched upon for the performance of this extraordinary office refused to discharge it, he was probably shot by the Threshers or Carders, and if he carried their wishes into effect, he was liable to be hanged by the government, so that his option lay between the relative comforts of being hanged or shot —a rather anomalous state of society, by the way.

The vengeance of the people against Purcel and his sons had now risen or was fast rising, to its height. This intrepid man and these resolute young men, aided by the writs of rebellion and the executive authorities, had nerved themselves up to the collection of tithe, through a spirit that was akin to vengeance. In fact, they felt an inhuman delight—at least the father and his eldest son did—in levying the execution of the writs in the most pitiless and oppressive manner. They themselves provided horses and carts, and under protection of the military and police—for both were now necessary—they swept off cattle, crops, and furniture, at a ruinous value to the defaulters. At length they proceeded to the house of a struggling widow, whose only son, exasperated at the ruin which their proceedings had wrought upon his mother, in an unguarded moment, induced a few thoughtless boys like himself to resist the law. It was an act of folly for which his life paid the penalty. He was shot dead on the spot, and his death proved the signal for raising the gloomy curtain that

veils the last of the drama in which the tithe-proctor makes his appearance.

Soon after the death of this youth, John Purcel had occasion to go to Dublin, to transact some business with the Rev. Dr. Turbot, and on his way to the metropolis he was obliged to stop for more than an hour at the county town, to await the arrival of the mail-coach. As he lingered about the door of the coach-office, he noticed a crowd of persons coming down the street, bearing something that resembled a human figure on a beir. It was evidently the corpse of some person, but at the same time he felt it could not have been a funeral, inasmuch as he saw that it came *from* the churchyard instead of going *to* it. The body was covered with a mort-cloth, so that he could not ascertain whether it was that of a man or a woman. Walking at its head as a chief mourner does at a funeral, was an old man with gray hair, who appeared to have every feature of his venerable countenance impressed with the character of an affliction which no language could express. He neither spoke nor looked to either side of him, but walked onward in a stupor of grief that was evidently too deep for tears—for he shed none, his face was pale even unto ghastliness, whilst at the same time there was a darkness over it, which evidently proceeded from the gloom of a broken down and hopeless heart.

John Purcel, after making some inquiry as to the cause of this singular procession, was enabled, from several of the by-standers, to ascertain the following affecting and melancholy particulars. The reader cannot forget the conversation between the proctor and his sons, concerning the murder of a certain farmer named Murray, in the early part of this narrative. The poor youth who had been appointed, under the diabolical system of Whiteboyism, to perpetrate that awful crime, was the very young man who, during the journey of the Whiteboys to the mountains, had held a kind of *sotto voce* conversation with the mysterious person who proved himself to be so sincere a friend to Frank M'Carthy. A misunderstanding for several years, or rather a feeling of ill-will, had subsisted between his father and Murray, and as this circumstance was known, the malignant and cowardly miscreants availed themselves of it to give a color of revenge to the murder, in order to screen themselves. At all events, the poor misguided youth, who had been stimulated with liquor, and goaded on to the commission of the crime, from fear of a violent death if he refused it, was tried, found guilty, and executed, leaving his childless father and mother, whose affections were centred *in him,* in a state of the most indescribable despair and misery. By the intercession and influence of friends, his body was restored to them, and interred in the churchyard, from which the procession just mentioned had issued. The heart, however—or, to come nearer the truth—the reason of the mother—that loving mother—could not bear the blow that deprived her of her innocent boy—her pride, her only one. In about a week after his interment she proceeded one morning to his grave, bearing with her the breakfast which the poor youth had been accustomed to take. This, in fact, became her daily habit, and here she usually sat for hours, until in most cases her woe-stricken husband, on missing her, was obliged, by some pardonable fiction, to lure her home under the expectation of seeing him. This continued during spring, summer, autumn, and the greater portion of winter—up in fact until the preceding night. She had, some time during the course of that night, escaped from her poor husband while he slept, and having entered the grave-yard by stone steps that were in a part of the wall—for a passage went through it—she reached her boy's grave, where it was supposed, after having for some time, probably until lassitude and sorrow, and a frame worn down by her peculiar calamity, had induced sleep—she was found dead in the course of the morning—an afflicting but beautiful instance of that undying love of a mother's heart, which survives the wreck of all the other faculties that compose her being.

Her miserable husband and friends were then bearing her body home, in order that it might be waked decently and with due respect, ere it should mingle with the ashes of him whom she had loved so well. So much for the consequences of being concerned in those secret and criminal confederacies, that commit such fatal ravages, not only in society, but in domestic life, and stand so strongly opposed to the laws of both God and man.

Purcel, on reaching the metropolis, was a great deal astonished at the change which he observed in Dr. Turbot. That gentleman's double chin had followed the carnal fortunes of the church that supported it. The rosy dewlap, in fact, was no longer visible, if we except a slight pendulous article, which defied the whole nomenclature of colors to classify its tint, and was only visible when his head and neck assumed a peculiar attitude. In fact, the change appeared to Purcel to have been an exceedingly beneficial one. The gross carnal character of his whole appearance was gone; his person had become comparatively thin, and had a far and distant, but still an approximating, tendency to something of the apostolic. He was now

leading by compulsion, a reasonable and natural life, and one not so much at variance with the simple principles of his religion, whatever it might be with those of the then establishment. His horses and carriages and powdered servants were all gone too, so was the rich air of wealth and costly luxury which formerly breathed throughout his fine mansion, in one of the most fashionable streets of the metropolis. His eye, no longer loaded by the bloodshot symptoms of an over-fed and plethoric constitution, was now clear and intellectual, and there appeared to be an unencumbered activity about his jaws that argued a vigor and quickness of execution in matters of a sumptuary character, which, when gross and unwieldy from luxury, they never could reach. He was by no means in his usual spirits, it is true, but then he was in much better health, and a vague report of something in the shape of a loan to the clergy, to the tune of a million, gave him a considerable degree of cheerfulness.

John Purcel, having dispatched his business with him as quickly as he could, called upon M'Carthy in college. This gentleman having, in fact, heard such an account of the threats and determinations of vengeance with which the Purcel family were threatened, had felt deep anxiety as to their fate. He had written more than once to them on the subject, entreating that, as their wealth had rendered them independent, they would remove either to Lisnagola or Dublin. This, however, was a determination to which they had come recently themselves, and one portion of John's business to the metropolis was connected with it.

On the day previous to Purcel's visit to M'Carthy, that young man had received the following short and somewhat mysterious communication from the country:—

"MR. M'CARTHY.—Sir—If you wish to *save* some of Mr. Purcel's family—save *them all* you cannot—and if you have courage, and isn't afraid to risk your life, you will come down to Longshot Lodge and wait there till you here more from

"ONE THAT HAS PROVED HIMSELF YOUR FRIEND."

This determined M'Carthy; and when John Purcel asked him to spend the Christmas with them, he felt gratified at the alacrity with which the other embraced his offer. The next morning they started for Longshot Lodge, and in due time were cordially greeted by the proctor and his family.

The day before Christmas—universally known as Christmas Eve—at length arrived. On that morning, our friend Mr. Temple and his family were seated at breakfast with easy and cheerful hearts, when the following conversation took place; and we introduce it for the purpose of gratifying our readers, who, we are certain, will rejoice in hearing the circumstances that form its subject matter.

"Charles, my dear, I always knew that my dear grandpapa was a kind and forgiving man; and, to tell the truth, I felt a conviction that such sincerity of heart, and such unexampled purity of purpose as yours, would not be permitted long to suffer. Read the letter again my love."

Her husband, whose mild features were absolutely radiant with an expression of delight—an expression that was elevated, besides, with a glow of fervent and devotional feeling—now read the letter again, which was to the following effect:—

"MY DEAR MARIA,—I do not think that a man of my years—now near seventy-two—who feels how many duties he has neglected in this life, and who, consequently, knows how much he requires to be forgiven, ought any longer to class himself with those who are disposed to withhold their pardon from human error. I wrote some time ago to your father, requesting, nay, commanding him, to suffer himself to be reconciled to you; but his reply was, that, although he was not averse to it in due time, yet he said that for the present he must decline it—not so much, he added, for want of affection for you, as that he might the more strongly manifest a sense of his displeasure at your conduct, in throwing yourself away upon 'an educated beggar.'"

The hectic of a moment, as Sterne beautifully says, came across his fine and handsome features as he uttered the words; and he added, "He forgets, my love, that my family is not, as your grandpapa says, inferior to his own."

"Do not dwell on that, dearest Charles," she added, "but let us hear good old grandpapa out."

"No, my dear Maria, I differ with your papa; Mr. Temple was not an educated beggar, but an educated and accomplished gentleman, whose family, in point of blood and birth, is equal even to ours. Still, my love, you know that on many accounts, and as persons to whom you were so justly dear, and who felt such a strong interest in your settlement and position in life, we had reason to feel offended at the step you took in marrying him. That, however, is past—and now let it be forgotten. Your papa still loves you tenderly, my Maria; for I could observe that in a passage where he said it was necessary that you should suffer a little longer, there were the marks of tears—and

of tears too, that fell thickly. Now, however, for something that will cheer my own favorite. I have succeeded in getting Mr. Temple appointed to the living of Ballynolan, in a safe and quiet part of the country, not many miles from Drumgooran Castle,"

"That you know my dear Charles, is his own family seat."

"I know, my love, it is; however, to proceed—from Drumgooran Castle; so that I will once more enjoy the pleasure of having you near me. The living is worth about five hundred a-year, after paying two curates and all other claims; so that, with frugality and moderation, you may live comfortably at least. Ah! my dear Maria, you knew the avenue to grandpapa's affections, when you called your eldest son after him. Present him with the enclosed, in my name, and tell Mr. Temple that he shall have a communication from me in a few days—it will be one of business; and I trust soon to have the pleasure of making his acquaintance.

"I am, my dear Maria, your ever affectionate grandfather,

"TAVNIMORE."

The enclosure alluded to was a bank post-bill for two hundred pounds. It is unnecessary, however, to dwell upon the happiness which this communication conferred upon Mrs. Temple and her affectionate family. She saw her accomplished and amiable husband's brilliant talents and many rare virtues, about to be rewarded—she saw poverty, distress, and famine driven from their hearth—she saw her beloved children about to be placed in circumstances not unbecoming their birth; and, having contemplated all this, she wept once more with a sense of happiness, as pure as it was unexpected.

Breakfast was now over—a plain and severely frugal one, by the way, it was—and her husband was about to proceed to Lisnagola, in order to get the bank post-bill changed, when, from the parlor where they sat, he saw the Cannie Soogah approaching the hall-door, the huge pack, as usual, on his shoulder.

"Here, my love, comes that benevolent pedlar," he exclaimed, "whose conduct, on the occasion you mentioned, was at once so delicate and generous."

He then stepped to the window, and raised it as our friend approached, who, on seeing him, put his hand to his hat, exclaiming, "Many happy returns of the saison, sir, to you and your family! My Christmas-box on you!"

"I thank you, my friend," replied Mr. Temple, "and I sincerely wish you the *same.*"

Mrs. Temple now approached also, bent her head kindly and condescendingly, in token of salutation, with a blush which she could not prevent. The worthy pedlar perfectly understood the blush—a circumstance by which he was a good deal embarrassed himself, and which occasioned him to feel in rather a difficult position. He felt flattered, however, by her condescension; and instead of merely touching his hat to her he pulled it off and stood respectfully uncovered.

"Put on your hat, my friend," said Temple; "the morning is too cold to stand with a bare head—pray put it on."

"I know, your honor," replied the pedlar, "the respect that is due to you both, and especially, sir," he added, in that tone, and with that peculiar deference, so gratifying to a husband who loves and is proud of his wife—"especially, sir, to *her*, for I know her family well—as who doesn't!"

"By the way," said Mrs. Temple, "I think you committed a mistake on the occasion of your last call here?"

"A mistake, ma'am!" said he, with well-feigned surprise—"well, indeed, ma'am, it's not unlikely; for, to tell you the truth, I've a vile mimory—sorra thing a'most but I disremimber, in a day or two after it happens."

"Do you not remember," she proceeded, with a melancholy smile, "a negotiation we had when you were here last?"

"A what, ma'am?"

"A—a—purchase you made from me," she added.

"From you!" he exclaimed, with apparent astonishment; "well, then, I can't say that I have any recollection of it—I remember something—that is, some dalins or other I had wid the maid, but I don't remember purchasin' anything from you, ma'am."

"It was a shawl," she replied, "which you purchased, if you remember, and paid for, but which you forgot to bring with you."

"Why, then," he exclaimed, after rubbing his head with his fore-finger, "bad cess to me if I can remimber it; but the truth is, ma'am, I make so many purchases, and so many sales, that like the priest and them that confess to him, the last thing fairly drives the one that went afore it out o' my head."

"You paid six guineas," continued Mrs. Temple, "for the shawl, but left it behind you."

"Well, bedad, ma'am," said the pedlar, smiling, "it's aisy to see that you're no rogue, at any rate. In the present case, thin," he added, "I suppose you wish to give me the shawl?"

"Oh, certainly," she replied, "if you wish for it; but at the same time I would much rather keep the shawl and return you the money."

"I'm in no hurry, ma'am for either shawl or money, if it isn't—hem—if it isn't just convanient."

"You are an honest, sterling fellow," said her husband, "and I assure you that we thoroughly appreciate your delicacy and worth. I know Mrs. Temple would prefer keeping the shawl, and if you will call in the course of the evening, I shall return the money to you. I must first go into Lisnagola to get change for a note."

"Thank you, sir," replied the Cannie, "but it is time enough—I am in no hurry at all—not the laist; it will do when I call again. And now that that's settled—and many thanks to *you*, ma'am," he added, bowing to Mrs. Temple, "for thinkin' of it, I'd be glad to have a word or two wid *you*, sir, if you plaise."

"Certainly," said Mr. Temple, going to the hall-door, and opening it, "come in a moment; leave your pack in the hall there, and come this way."

He then proceeded to the library, whither the pedlar followed him; and after looking about him with something like caution, he said, "You know Mr. Purcel, the proctor, sir?"

"Of course I do," replied Mr. Temple.

"I'm not askin' it as a question," he proceeded; "but I wish to say, that as you do know him and his sons, it's possible you may save them from destruction. I was tould by a stranger that I never seen before, and that I didn't know from Adam, that his house is to be attacked either this night or to-morrow night."

"Can you not say which?" asked Mr. Temple.

"No," replied the Cannie Soogah; "I axed the stranger the same question, and he couldn't tell me. Now, sir, you know them, and I know how much they respect you; and the thing is this,—I think if you'd see them, and thry to get them to go to Lisnagola, or some safe place, takin' their lives and money along wid them, you'd save them from murdher; they'd be apt to listen to you; but as for me, or the likes o' me, they'd laugh at me; indeed, they're rather wishin' for an attack, in hopes they might get revenge upon the people, for, to tell you the truth, they've been foolish enough to say so; an' as their words has gone abroad, the people's determined, it seems, to let them know which o' them is strongest."

"Well," replied the curate, "I am sorry to hear this—it is dreadful. That they are unpopular—nay, detested—I know; as I do, also, that they have latterly gone daring lengths—oppressive and unjustifiable lengths—in collecting tithes. I shall, however, see them, and endeavor to make them take refuge in some place of security."

"It will be a good act," said the pedlar, "and if I can do anything, humble as I am, to save them, I'll do it."

"I think they ought to get a party of police to protect the house," observed Mr. Temple.

"I know they ought, sir," replied the pedlar, "but the truth is, they're so proud and foolhardy, that the very mention of such a thing throws them into a fury."

"That is unfortunate," said the other. "At all events, I shall leave nothing undone within my power to prevail on them to take steps for their security. You may rely on it," he added, "that whatever I can do for that purpose, I shall do."

"Well, now," said the Cannie, "my mind, thank God's, aisier. I'll lose no time myself in seein' what I can do to prevent this business; that is, I mane, their stayin' in the house," he added, as if checking or correcting himself.

He then bade Mr. Temple good morning, and hurried away, without waiting to see his fair friend, Lilly, as was his custom to do.

CHAPTER XVII.

Midnight Court of Justice—Sentence of the Proctor and His Sons.

BREAKFAST in the proctor's, on the morning of Christmas Eve, was eaten as if it had been a funeral meal. The proctor himself could not raise his spirits, which were generally high and cheerful. John and Alick were much more serious than usual; and were it not for the presence of M'Carthy, the meal in question would have been a very gloomy one indeed. Even M'Carthy himself felt the influence of the spirit that prevailed, and found that all his attempts to produce cheerfulness or mirth among them were by no means successful. The two sons, as if acting under the influence of some unaccountable presentiment, engaged themselves in casting bullets for the fire-arms with which the house was furnished, whilst M'Carthy spent his time with the ladies, and endeavored to amuse them as well as he could. About twelve o'clock John rode into the town of Lisnagola to bring home a blunderbuss which he had sent the day before, by Mogue Moylan, for the purpose of having it furnished

with a new ramrod. Mogue being engaged in some matters of a pressing nature, John determined to go for it himself, especially as he wanted to lay in a better supply of powder. Of this Mogue knew nothing.

Mr. Temple soon made his appearance, but, as the pedlar feared, the object of his visit was not attended with success. He urged all the arguments in his power upon the proctor and his son Alick, to remove instantly, and at once, to Lisnagola, or some other neighboring town, where, for the present, they might be safe. Instead of listening to the argument of instant removal, they laughed it to scorn. In the course of the following week, they said, it was their intention to remove; but to think of breaking up their family on a Christmas Eve, with a guest in their house too!—the thing was out of the question. A few days made no great difference; and their mind was fixed not to disturb their family or their guest, then.

Soon after Mr. Temple had gone, Julia Purcel met M'Carthy in the hall, and asked him for a moment to the dining-room, in a voice which was tremulous with agitation.

"Alas! Frank," she exclaimed, whilst the tears streamed from her eyes, "I feel a weight like that of death upon my heart. I fear there is some dreadful calamity hanging over this family."

"Why, my dear Julia," he replied, wiping the tears from her eyes, "will you suffer yourself to be overcome by a weakness of mind so unworthy of you? The morning is dark and gloomy, and calculated, apart from such silly anticipations—pardon me, Julia—to fill the mind with low spirits. Cheer up, my dear girl; is not this season, in a peculiar manner, set apart for cheerfulness and enjoyment? Why, then, will you indulge in this weak and foolish melancholy?"

"I would not feel as I do," she replied, "but the truth is—now do not scold me, Frank—in fact I had an omen of calamity last night!"

"An omen! how is that?" he asked.

"On bidding my papa and John good-night, as I was going to bed, about eleven o'clock, I saw them both standing below me at the foot of the stairs, in the hall. I started, and turning again into the drawing-room, where I had just left them, saw that there they certainly stood, without scarcely having had time to change their position."

"A mere physical illusion, my dear Julia; nothing else."

"But is it not said," she added, "that to see the likeness of an individual late at night is an omen of almost immediate death?"

"It has been said so, I admit, my dear Julia, as have fifty thousand follies equally nonsensical. But to hear *you*, Julia, talk in this manner! upon my word, I'm surprised at it."

"You will not think of leaving us, dear Frank, until we get to a place of safety?"

"Unquestionably not; but you are alarming yourself unnecessarily."

"Well, perhaps I am," she said, gaining confidence from his firmness of manner; "but I assure you, Frank, I am not timid, nor a coward. I can load a gun, pistol, or blunderbuss, and what is better still, can discharge them without shrinking; so can my sister; but with respect to anything of a supernatural character——"

"You are a great coward. I perceive that; but, my dear Julia, to pass to a subject of the deepest interest to my happiness:—why is it that there has been an appearance of gloom and distrust about you for such a length of time? I think there should be nothing but the most unbounded confidence between us."

"Have you been perfectly candid with me, Frank?"

"If you remember, dear Julia, you did not afford me an opportunity. You looked as if you felt offended, and I could perceive that you had withdrawn your confidence."

"My mind is too much distracted now," she replied, "to speak on this subject; but, if you wish it, I shall tell you, on Monday next, why I have appeared so."

"Wish it! alas! my dear Julia, I can only say that my affection for you knows no bounds. Julia, you know I have loved you; and, happen what may, I shall carry that affection for you to my grave. Only say that the affection which you have already confessed for me is not cooled or diminished; only say it, dearest life, and you will relieve my heart of a heavy load."

She fixed her beautiful dark eyes upon him, as if she were in the act of scrutinizing his very spirit; at length, she seemed to have arrived at a fixed conclusion; two or three tears slowly followed each other down her cheeks, and she replied, "I fear, Frank, I have been led to do you injustice; that is, to doubt your truth or your honor; yes," she added, in a low confiding voice, "I feel that I love you as I ever did. But I am depressed, and my heart is full of an unaccountable sorrow."

"My ever—ever dear—dearest Julia!" he exclaimed, as he pressed her to his heart; where she sobbed, and tenderly reacknowledged her love. "On Monday, however," she observed, after having somewhat composed herself, "I shall tell you, at full length, the circumstances that have disturbed me with respect to you." Another kiss as they

separated, and so it was arranged between them.

When Mogue Moylan heard that John Purcel had gone to the gunsmith's for the blunderbluss, he stealthily sought the barn where he slept, and, putting on a great frieze coat, he went to the haggard; approached the stack, and thrusting his hand up the thatch, secured a case of pistols that had been left with him and Jerry Joyce for their defence, and fixing them under his coat, deliberately took his departure.

"I'll have betther luck," he said to himself, "to join the boys, and as I have my own party among them that'll stand to me, we'll have the best chance. I'm to take charge o' the girls for him, after the men's shot; an' it'll go hard if I don't do him out o' the one he's set upon. If I sted in the house, as I intended at first, maybe it's a bullet from the boys I'd get into me. No—no—every way—think of it as I will, it's my wisest plan to cut; an' at any rate, he'd find me out now about the blunderbuss. Have her, however, I will, or lose a fall for it."

This was Mogue's last appearance but one about the proctor's establishment.

John Purcel, on inquiring for the blunderbuss at the gunmaker's heard that Mogue had waited until the ramrod was put in, after which the man said he brought it home; a fact which Purcel never doubted. On the contrary, he felt annoyed at his own stupidity for not having asked Mogue the question before he went; and he consequently blamed himself more than he did Mogue. On his way home, however, he met Mogue; and it is necessary to state that none of the Purcel family returned to their house, for a considerable time past, by the same way, unless indeed very rarely. Mogue had come out upon the road, which he was crossing just as John turned a corner, and came plump upon him.

"What is the reason, Mogue," he asked, "That you didn't let me know you had brought home the blunderbuss?"

"That I may be happy, Mr. John, but it was beknise you didn't ax me; an' a beautiful new ramrod it has now, at any rate."

"Where are you bound for, Mogue?"

"Why, up to Harry Sproule's for paper and writin' things for the ladies. Any news in Lisnagola, Mr. John?"

"Nothing that's good, at any rate," replied the other; "except that the country, Mogue, must be put under martial law."

He set spurs to his horse on uttering these words, and immediately rode on.

"Ay," said Mogue, as he looked bitterly after him, "there you go, you blasted tyrant! Martial law! Ah, if I had *her* from among you, I didn't care the divil's blazes had you all, as they will soon; an' that may be, I pray Jasus this day! Martial law! ah, bad luck to you!"

On reaching home, John Purcel made no immediately inquiry about the blunderbuss, having taken it for granted that all was right, nor was Mogue's disappearance or treachery at all suspected, until late in the course of the night.

Twilight was now setting in, when a strange man called at the proctor's and said he wished to speak with Mr. M'Carthy. M'Carthy came to the hall-door, and looking at him keenly inquired his business.

"I don't know," said the man; "I can only tell you what I was desired to say to you."

"Well, let us hear even that," said the other.

"I was bid to ax you, if you wish to sarve this family."

"I do, most certainly."

"In that case, then, you're to follow me," said the man.

"I have no such intention, I assure you, my good fellow," replied the other.

"Very well, then, I have done my duty," said the man, turning to depart.

"But," said our friend, "will you not let me know who it was that sent you."

"I tell you," replied the stranger, "that I don't know. I was bid to say to you that *the hour is come, and the man*, and that's all I know; barrin' that as I said you wor bid to come wid me, if you wish to sarve this family. Now I must go."

"Stop a moment," said M'Carthy, "till I return into the house, and let them know I'm going out."

"No," replied the other; "if you do, you won't find me here when you come back. This instant, or never."

"To serve this family, you say?"

"To sarve this family, I was *bid* to say. I know nothing, an' can say nothing about it myself."

"Come, then," said M'Carthy, resolutely, and thinking of the note he had received in college, "I trust you, or rather I will trust the man that sent you;" and having uttered these words, he departed with the stranger.

The scene now changes to a hill, three or four miles distant from the proctor's house, called Crockaniska, at the foot of which was a small but beautiful lake or tarn, from which a graceful little stream fell down into a green and picturesque valley, that lay to the south below it. The shades of evening were beginning to deepen, but for a considerable time before, the road that went

past it was observed to be more than usually thronged with men, some on foot and others on horseback; all presenting a solemn and determined aspect, as if bent upon some dangerous enterprise that must be accomplished, and all apparently strangers to the inhabitants of the place, and to each other. On the brow of the hill stood a picturesque ruin, and the hill itself was literally covered with men and horses; for it was evident, by the fatigued and travel-stained appearance of both, that they had come from a far distance. After dusk had set in, the crowd assumed an appearance of stern repose, but at the same time, and somewhat contrasting with this dreadful stillness, pale lights might be seen flitting from time to time through the ragged apertures, and vacant windows of the ruin. Inside this dreary old building were those who, from the greater respectability of their dress, appeared to be their leaders; men of trust and authority among them, by whose will and opinions they were to be guided. A table and chairs, provided on this occasion, were placed for the transaction of business, and on these, after some proceedings, conducted with a good deal of form, had been transacted, twelve comfortably, if not well-dressed looking farmers sat, whilst on another chair, considerably elevated above the rest, a person in the garb at least of a gentleman, seemed to preside over, and regulate the business of the night.

After a short silence, the judge asked, in an audible voice, if there was any business to be brought before "The Court of Right," on that occasion. He was immediately answered, in a solemn and almost melancholy tone of voice, that there was a great deal of business before the court, but that only one case, that of Captain Right against Purcel Senior and sons, was for hearing and adjudication on that occasion.

On hearing the name of Purcel, the judge took from his pocket a broad, blood-red ribbon, as did also each of the twelve farmers who constituted the jury, and having tied it about his left arm, in which they imitated him, he composed himself for the resumption of business. The ribbons were a twofold symbol, signifying, in the first place, that the Purcels had shed the blood of the people, and were to be tried for murder; and in the second, that if found guilty, the sentence of Captain Right would exact from them the fearful penalty of blood for blood. A compact, well knit, and intelligent young man, about twenty-six years of age, now rose up, and unrolling a long scroll of paper, read in a low but distinct voice, a long and dark series of charges preferred by the aforesaid Captain Right against the said Matthew Purcel and his sons. That person, on this occasion, was the representative of Captain Right.

The judge then observed, that the charges must be proved to the satisfaction of the jury, and called upon Captain Right's advocate to substantiate them. It would spin out our description to a fatiguing length, were we to go through all the cases of oppression, fraud, and cruelty, that were brought home to the unfortunate proctor; against whom, if we are to take him as the exponent of his heartless class, every one of them was strictly true.

He was found guilty, for instance, of taking —often beforehand, or in reversion—several small farms over the heads of poor but solvent tenants; turning them adrift on the world, and consolidating their holdings into one large stock farm for grazing; there by adding to the number of the destitute, and diminishing the supply of food for the people.

He was found guilty of paying to his laborers the wretched sum of only eightpence a day; which he paid by the vile truck system—that is to say by forcing them to take potatoes, milk, meal, &c., at nearly twice what the same commodities brought in the open market.

His sons were found guilty of insolence and cruelty, against such poor and distressed persons as had occasion to go to the proctor's office, for the purpose of asking indulgence, or time to meet their engagements. Their insolence and cruelty consisted in giving abusive language to, and horsewhipping them as if they were not men, or possessed of the same rights, privileges, and feelings, as themselves. These were only a few of the charges, involving petty tyranny, oppression, and rapacity, against Purcel and his sons; but the last, and greatest, and most odious of them all, was the ruin he had brought upon so many, by his tithe exactions, and the expenses he had heaped on them by processes of law, in recovering that blood-stained impost, as it was not improperly called.

These were all proved by witnesses, and although we must admit, that the great body of the evidence was true, in point of fact, yet there was not a word said, of the insolence, threatening language, falsehood, evasion, and defiance, which Purcel and his sons had in general experienced from the people, before they had been forced to have recourse, in matters of tithe, to such harsh proceedings against them. When the case for Captain Right was about to close, there was a slight stir, and a low indistinct murmur ran through those who thronged the ruin.

"There is another charge still to come," said the young man who conducted the prosecution; "we pass by the three massa-

cres, and all the blood that was shed in them; and all the sorrow and misery, and affliction that they occasioned—we pass them by, I say, and to show all here present that we are not like Purcel and his sons, resolved to avail ourselves of any advantage against those we prosecute, I will just confine myself to one case of murder, instead of many—because you all know, that if they are found guilty upon one count, it will be sufficient for our purpose. Widow Flanagan, come up and prove your sorrowful case."

A pale, emaciated woman, whose countenance was the very reflex of affliction and despair, now was assisted to make her way from the further part of the building. She was dressed in the deepest mourning, with the exception of the ribbons, which were, like the rest, a deep blood-red, as an indication that one of her family had been murdered.

"Widow Flanagan," said the counsel for Captain Right, "will you have the goodness to state your distressing case?"

"Oh, no, no!" she exclaimed; "I'll not state it—I'm beginnin' to fear what your intentions is this night; and as for me, I'll not help you, by act or word, to fulfil that fearful intention. Oh, change it!" she exclaimed; "there has been too much blood shed in the country; too much bad work every way in it. Call upon God to change your hearts, and go home to your families while your hands isn't yet stained with blood! You all know what the law is when it's let loose upon you, as it ought be, whenever you commit murther, and take away your fellow-crature's life. I forgive Purcel and his sons; it was neither him nor them that took my boy's life, but the sogers—oh, no!" she exclaimed, "I see what you're bint on, and why you are sittin' to try the unfortunate Purcels. I read it in your black fearful looks, and dark faces—may God turn your hearts, and forgive you for bringin' me here this night! Surely you ought to know that one like me, who suffered so much by the spillin' of blood, wouldn't wish to see my fellow-cratures sufferin' as I am? Oh, no! I forgive the Purcels, and why shouldn't you? an' the worst prayer I have for them is, that God may forgive them and change their hearts!"

Alas! that we should say so, but the truth is, that no charge against Purcel, how bitter and malignant soever it might have been, could have occasioned such a deep-seated and uncontrollable vengeance against the unfortunate family, as the language of this extraordinary and great-minded peasant woman. There was nothing further said at the moment, every attention was paid to her wishes; in accordance with which a party of men and horses were sent to convey her safely home.

When she was gone, a neighbor of hers, who was present, came forward, and made an accurate and affecting statement of the circumstances connected with the death, or, as he termed it, and as we fear it was, the murder of her son.

"The poor, lovin' boy's mother," he proceeded, "the heart-broken Christian woman, that you all seen and heard this night, was not long after a fit of sickness. She was barely able to move about, but not to work or do anything in the house. When they came out to take away their property, she had two cows, but only one of them gave any milk. They wor axed to take the dry cow and any other part of the property they might think proper, but, 'for God's sake!' said the boy, 'as my poor mother is only risin' out of her illness, lave us the cow that can give her the drop of milk; the black water will kill her if you don't.' But no, this they wouldn't do; but what did they do? Why, they left the dry cow behind them, and tuck away the one that gave the kindly drop o' milk to the sick widow and her poor family; they then brought off—ay—swept away—six times the amount of what she owed; which they bought in for a song. It's well known that of late Purcel and his sons swore that they'd execute every process in the sevairest and most expensive manner upon the people, and as they kept their oath I hope too we'll keep ours. Well, it was when the poor boy saw the drop o' milk, as he said, goin' from his poor mother, that he opposed them. You all know the rest; he was shot stone-dead bekaise he loved that mother. The case is now in your hands, and this is all I have to say, barrin' to ask you, gintlemen of the jury, to take a look at this, and think of him it belonged to, that's now laid low in an airly and untimely grave, through Mat Purcel and his sons."

He then placed a lock of fair and beautiful hair, which had been taken from the youth's brow, in the hands of the foreman, and resumed his seat.

Oh, human nature! especially Irish human nature, what a mystery art thou!

The foreman, on receiving it, held it in his hands for some time, and so completely was he touched by the beauty of the tress, and the affection of him to whom it had belonged, that the tears gushed from his eyes; and as these men, who were then in the very act of trampling upon the laws of God and men, looked at it, one by one, there was scarcely a dry eye among them. As water, however, is frequently sprinkled over fire, in

order to enkindle it into a more scorching heat, so did the tears they shed add fresh strength and fury to the vengeance which smouldered within them.

This closed the case for Captain Right, and the judge asked if there was any one present prepared with a defense for Mat Purcel and his sons.

Our old friend, Darby Hourigan, who dressed himself in rags for the occasion, then came forward; and, after pulling up the waistband of his breeches, and twisting his revolting features into what he designed for, but what no earthly being could suppose, a grin, he spoke as follows:—"My lard, an' gintlemen o' the jury, it 'ud be a hard case if we suffered poor Misther Purcel and his two daicent, ginerous, kind-hearted sons, to be condimed 'idout a word at all in their defince. First, then, is it fair that we should be angry bekaise one of our own race and rallagion should spring up from among ourselves, and take his station over us like the Cromwellian shoneens, that are doin' oppression upon uz and our shildres! An', hadn't he as good a right to get the law at his back as they have? an' to make it bring him through the same hard-hearted coorses that made him rich and keep us poor? What had he done but what others had been doin' for ages, an' wor doin' still? ay, by jackers, an' 'ud continue to do unless the people put a stop to it. Worn't his sons gintlemen no less? Didn't they go out to hunt dressed in top-boots, buck-skin breeches, scarlet coats, and velvet jockey-caps; and didn't his daughters ride about upon blood-horses an' side-saddles? An' why are they called *blood*-horses do yez know? Ah, by japers, if yez don't I'll tell you—it's bekaise they wor bought and maintained by the blood of the poor? Ay, they do all this, but if they do, who's to blame them? Poor! ershisin! Arra, what was I sayin'? Sure they do it bekaise we all have plenty to ait and dhrink, plenty to wear; good coats to our backs, like this"—and here he shook the rags he dangled about him in hundreds; "good breeches to—hem—no matther—good shoes and stockings to our feet; good heads to our hats—hut! I mane good hats to our heads—and fusht-rate linen to our shkins; ay—sich as this," he added again. "Whisht!" he exclaimed, with a laugh like an Eclipse, "bad luck to the tatther of it, but I forgot at home—along wid the other eleven—or stop—here it is to the good still," pointing to his naked skin, "an' be my sowl, boys—my lard an' gintlemen o' the jury, I mane—it's the weaver of this linen that'll stand to us yet.

"Gintlemin, I do maintain that there's a great dale to be said for Mat Purcel. To be sure he skrewed the last fardin' out of uz, but where was there ever a tithe-procthor that didn't do the same thing? An' sure if he tuck as much as he could from huz, an' gev as little as he could to the parson, wasn't it all so much the betther? Wasn't it weakenin' their fat church and fattening our weak on'?—where's the honest Catholic could say a word aginst that? To be sure, we all know that, by his knowledge of farmin', and all the ins and outs of our little tillage, he contrived, one way or other, to take about the fifth of our little produce; but then if he did, didn't he say it was all by way of friendship an' indulgence to us? Sure didn't himself tell us that only he pitied us an' felt for us, he'd a' been ten times harsher than he was, an' so he would, be coorse, an' 'tis thankful we have a right to be, an' not grumblin' at all at all.

"I hould half a dozen could an' miserable acres, an' about three weeks ago, he tuck about one-fourth of the whole produce, owin' to citations to the bishop's coorts, an' a long string o' costs jined to the tithe itself—bad luck to it!—an' didn't he prove to me that he let me off for a song, an' was the best-hearted procthor that ever skrewed a defaulther? Well, an' isn't every small farmer, that doesn't wish to go law, or isn't able to right himself, as well off as I am—glory be to God! I declare, thin, I don't see why we should be angry wid so kind an' merciful a man.

"Thin, again, it made a man religious, an' was aiquil to goin' to one's duty, to go to ax time or indulgence from his sons. It isn't a clear case that you'd get the indulgence, but it is a clear case that you wor sure to get a horsewhippin'. Now, you know a horsewhippin' 'ud make a man repint goin' to him, an' when a man's in a repintin' state, he may as well repint for whatever sins he has committed, while his hand's in.

"Altogether, thin, my lard an' gintlemin o' the jury, I think it's clear that Purcel an' his sons is a great benefit to the counthry about us, an' that they ought to be acquitted, especially as it's likely that they have more processes to sarve, more auctions to hould, an' may be, more widow's sons to take off the hands of their poor strugglin' mothers—the crathurs, that's badly able to support them; and anyhow, nobody can blame a man that opens the gates of heaven for his fellow-creature's sowl, and sends him there.

"I hope, my lard an' gintlemen, that I've now done my duty in defendin' the Purcels, and that I've proved to your satisfaction that they ought to be acquitted."

This harangue of Hourigan's was received with singular alternations of fierce rage, and

mirth that was still fiercer and more frightful. At the conclusion of it there was a loud stamping of feet, accompanied by an exulting uproar of approbation. Silence, however, being called, the jurors put their heads together across the table, and in less than two minutes their foreman handed up the issue paper to a person who acted as register and secretary to the meeting. On receipt of this, that worthy functionary, in a solemn, deep, and barely audible voice, read a verdict of "guilty," which was received in solemn silence by the assembly.

The judge then rose, and in a voice that was also solemn but distinct, pronounced the sentence of the court to be—"Death and dark destruction to Matthew Purcel and his sons," with an order that it should be carried into execution on that very night. The judge then addressed them at some length, pretty closely to the following effect:

"Now, my friends," said he, "there is no man in this building who has not before now been engaged in affairs of danger and of death. Every one of you is the leader of a party of determined fellows, who fear nothing. Our business is—to susteen the oppressed, to crush tyrants, and to right those who have been wronged. I am not sorry that the person in command over me is absent to-night, for I look upon the office I hold, and the exploit we are engaged on, as a high honor. If that person, however, is not with us he is engeeged for us, and will send us a strong reinforcement in the course of the night. I don't expect that the attack on Purcel's house will deteen us long, and after that we have other visits to meek, and several fields of pasture to dig up. You all know who I mane when I mention the man that has authority over us."

"We do," replied the crowd; "three cheers for *him!*" This was accordingly responded to, and the speaker proceeded.

"You are to understand," said he, "that Purcel and his two sons are this night to die, and their house and pleece to be reduced to ashes. There is one thing, however, that I must strongly impress upon you—remember that you are not to injure any of the faymales of the family in the slightest degree. The second daughter must be taken and brought to a mounted guard that will be ready behind the garden-hedge, to bear her off to the mountains—they know themselves where. I will overteek them, or perhaps be there by the upper road before them. If any of you has a fancy for the other sister, I'm not the man that will stand in your way; but in order to encourage you to do your dooty, I now decleer that it is the man who will best distinguish himself among you that must get her. You all know what you are to do. The old tyrant, root and branches, is to be cut off, and his second daughter secured to me. You have been told the password for the night, and if you find any men among you that knows it not, put him instantly to death as a spy and a traitor. And now, my brave fellows, every man to his post, and I, who am for this night at least your commander, will lead you on. Come, then, follow me, and again I say—'Death and dark destruction to Matthew Purcel and his two sons!'"

In a few minutes the vast multitude was in motion, all dressed in white shirts and disguised by blackened faces. The were certainly a fierce and formidable body, amounting, it is calculated, to not less than five thousand men, collected, as it was well known, from the seven adjoining counties.

The aspect of the sky, on this awful night, was long remembered by the inhabitants of that part of the country. Over towards the west, and away as far as the south, it seemed to be one long mass of deep, angry-looking fire, that seemed both frightful and portentous, and made the spectator feel as if a general and immediate conflagration of the heavens was about to take place: whilst stretched nearer in point of space to the eye, were visible large bars of cloud that seemed, from their crimson color, to be masses of actual blood. In fact, the whole firmament was full of gloom and terror, and pregnant with such an appalling spirit of coming storm as apparently to threaten the destruction of the elements.

It was quite evident, from the disturbed and unsettled appearance of the country for miles around, and from the circumstance of such an unusual multitude being on foot in the course of the evening, that some deed of more than ordinary importance or danger was to be done. The Purcel's, ever on the watch, soon learned that they were to be attacked on that very night by those who had threatened them so often, and to whom they themselves had so frequently sent back a stern and fierce defiance. Little had they calculated, however, that the onset would be made by men so well armed and in such prodigious multitudes.

Such was the state of society at that period, that scarcely any one individual could place confidence in another. The Purcels, knowing that they were looked upon by the people in a hostile spirit, and aware of the disguises which those secret confederacies, that are so peculiar to our unfortunate country, often take for treacherous and vindictive purposes, came to the resolution of putting every servant in the house, male and female,

from off the premises. This they did on discovering Mogue Moylan's treachery with respect to the fire-arms; for, in point of fact, they knew not on whom to depend. M'Carthy's disappearance was also a mystery which occasioned them considerable anxiety and doubt. That he should have abandoned them in the very moment of danger, was a circumstance quite out of their calculation. On the other hand, it was obvious that he had done so, and that from whatever motive his conduct proceeded, he distinctly separated himself from them, at the very crisis when his presence and assistance might have been of service.

In the meantime they began to make preparations for their defence. Purcel's dwelling-house was a long, two-storied building, deeply thatched. He himself and his eldest son carried up a large supply of arms and ammunition to the top room, where they took their station so as to command the large gate of the recently-built fortress wall, by which the house and adjoining premises were surrounded. Alick, his mother and sisters, remained below, in such a position that they could command the gate also, without exposing themselves to danger. The mother and daughters had been well trained to load and even to discharge fire-arms; and now they were both competent and willing to take an important part in defense of their own lives, as well as those who were so dear to them.

"Well," said John Purcel, when every necessary preparation had been made, "I never could have dreamt that Frank M'Carthy was either a coward or a traitor."

"I very much fear," replied his brother, "that he is either the one or the other, if not both. If he has got a hint—ha!—do you hear that again?—they are firing still as they come along—if he has got a hint of this attack and abandoned us, I have not words to express my contempt for him. What a brave lover you have got, Julia!" he exclaimed, turning to his sister, "thus to desert you in the hour of danger."

Julia made no immediate reply, but, after wiping away some bitter tears, she at length said, "I will not believe it—it cannot be possible: I know it is very strange and unaccountable, and I certainly cannot understand it."

"Do you imagine it possible that M'Carthy could belong to this confederation of blood?" asked Alick; "I at least have been told so much: however, perhaps time will tell us more about it. For my part——" He had nearly pronounced the words, when a heavy trampling of feet, joined to a deep murmur of suppressed voices, was heard; a horn was then sounded, and, in about half a minute afterwards, Purcel and his sons were called upon to surrender and admit the assailants. From the moment the first shots were heard, on the part of the approaching enemy, the Purcels concealed all their lights, so that, when the former reached the outer wall, the house seemed wrapped in obscurity—as if the family were buried in sleep.

They now assailed the gate, but soon found that there was little likelihood of forcing an entrance without heavier implements than those they had in their possession. On ascertaining that this was not practicable, they began to fire at the roof of the dwelling-house, and at those of the out-offices, with the hope that some portion of the wadding, when lighted, might ignite them. In this, after repeated attempts and failures, they were ultimately successful. A cow-house that stood detached from the other buildings, and, in point of proximity, nearest the gate, at length caught the flame, and in a few minutes began to burn. This, to be sure, might have been of little consequence to the insurgents, were it not that the wind, which was gusty and blew sometimes with a good deal of strength, now and then swept the blaze over to the other offices, which were, consequently, soon in flames; and it was now obvious that the dwelling-house, from its position and the direction of the blast, could not possibly escape.

Hitherto, there was no appearance of either light or life in the proctor's dwelling, and the insurgents were by no means satisfied with the progress they had made. It is true, they felt confident that none of the Purcels had escaped since they approached the house—a circumstance which was impossible, in consequence of the *cordon* of the enemy that had been drawn around the outer wall. Another surmise, however, maddened them almost to fury. Could it be possible that the objects of their hatred had abandoned the house in the earlier part of the night, and thus defrauded them of their vengeance? The thought was intolerable; but that was a point which they would now be in a capacity soon to ascertain.

Finding that the gate, as we said, was impregnable, unless with stronger implements, they had sent to a smith's forge in the neighborhood, from whence they obtained two or three sledge-hammers. By the aid of these they soon shivered the gate to pieces, and, having accomplished this, they—— Before we proceed further, it is necessary to state, that the light of the burning cow-house fell upon them with the strength and clearness of a summer noon; whilst, on the other hand, the proctor's family, from the position of the house, were in complete obscurity.

The advantage was, consequently, all on one side; the Purcels, when the gate was demolished, saw the crowd clearly and distinctly, but the crowd could not at all see them. Feather-beds and other defenses had been placed at the windows, in such a manner that the firing from the house could be delivered with almost perfect impunity to the inmates, but with dreadful and deadly effect upon the assailants. The latter, having accomplished the destruction of the gate, were in the act of entering, when, all at once, such a well-directed volley was poured among them as caused every man of the front ranks to fall dead. Four blunderbusses had been discharged among them—three by the proctor and his two sons, and one by his eldest daughter Mary. The fatal effect with which this fire was delivered caused a momentary pause, and the aggressive crowd was forced to rush back in a kind of wavy motion, that resembled the undulations of a retreating serpent. An immediate return, however, took place; and, in about half a minute, those in front, however reluctant, were forced forward by the pressure from without. Again did a well-directed fire bring down those who were thrust forward, and the consequence was that a back action took place, which enabled those in front to retire for the present from what they clearly saw was certain death.

So far the proctor's family were triumphant, and would have been so, were it not for the conflagration of the offices, which every moment threatened their own house with destruction. There was not now one among the crowd hardy enough to attempt an entrance by the open gate—which entrance they knew to be only another name for death. Two circumstances, however, were at work against the brave and intrepid proctor and his equally brave and intrepid sons. Crowbars had been procured, and three breaches were being made in those parts of the wall which the windows of the house did not command, and what was still equally, if not more dreadful to the besieged, was the fact of the dwelling-house having taken fire, from the flames that were wafted to it by the conflagration of the adjoining offices. The breaches having been effected, the assailants precipitated themselves into the yard; and now commenced the work of destruction in reality. The latter were shot down in scores; whilst at the same time, the windows of the house from which this destructive fire was kept up so ably, received fifty discharges to one that had been made from them. The house was immediately surrounded, and guards were placed at the doors and lower windows, with strict and fatal orders to allow none of the family to escape, with the exception of the females—one of whom was to be secured, as the reader knows, for a particular purpose, and the rest as chance or passion might direct.

The Purcels, in the meantime, ably served and assisted by Mrs. Purcel and her daughters, continued to deal death and destruction on the parties outside, without being yet either fatigued or disabled. At length the terrific light of the roof that was burning over them, and the stifling heat which began to oppress them, startled the proctor into a state of feeling so awful, that it obliterated from his awakened conscience all external impressions of the dreadful havoc of human life which was taking place about him. The feeling was deepened by a discovery that the gate had been broken and breaches made in the walls, as well as by the incredible multitude of armed persons about the premises, most of whom were now distinctly visible by the glare of the conflagration.

The life of Matthew Purcel, though unstained by any of those gross crimes which separate man from his fellows, or draw down the punishment of the law upon those who commit them, was, nevertheless, in a singular degree, unfeeling, oppressive, and rapacious. Though plausible and clever in his manner, and anxious to stand well with the world, he was, at the same time, relentless and implacable, a tyrant within the petty sphere of his influence, a despiser of all those principles that were not calculated, no matter how, to elevate and enrich. He ground the poor, and wrung, by the most oppressive extortion, out of their sweat and labor, all and much more than they could afford to give him. With destitution and poverty in their most touching and pitiable shapes, he never had one moment's sympathy, nor did the widow or orphan ever experience a single act of benevolence or mercy at *his* hands.

There was now a short pause in the work of destruction, but it was evident to him and his family that some new element of action was at work among the multitude, though of its character and object they could form no possible conjecture. The Purcels had now a short space for reflection, and but a short one, for they all felt, by the increasing heat that proceeded from the burning roof, that they could not long abide under it. Alick and the females had joined John and his father in the top room, and the latter now saw clearly that fate, in its most dreadful and appalling shape, was on him and his whole family, for it was clear, as matters stood, that neither he nor his sons, at all events, could escape the vengeance of the infuriated multitude. In this condition, his

veins swollen, and the perspiration standing in large beads upon his forehead, he took one fearful and agonizing glance upon his past life, and felt, now that he stood on the verge of eternity, that the retrospect was like a glimpse of hell. The change that came over his features was frightful beyond all belief; his face became nearly black, and his eyes, which grew bloodshot almost in a few minutes, had, notwithstanding, a sharp delirious expression of terror that no language could depict.

"Great God! father," exclaimed his son John, who first noticed this change in his appearance, "what is the matter with you?"

"We are lost!" he exclaimed; "oh, my past life! Great Heaven! if I had but one act of kindness to look back upon, I could dare death. Children, the tortures of hell are upon me! Here is death at my throat, but how will I die? Hallo—look!" he exclaimed, "do you see it?—it is all black—black and bloody—black and bloody—that life of mine! Crimes — crimes — crimes against the poor—against the widow and the orphan! Why did I do it? Eh, why did I oppress, and grind, and murder! Ay, murder!—where's Widow Flanagan's son?—where's all the blood I was the means of shedding?—where are the rotten corpses that are now festering in the grave, because I was rapacious and an oppressor? Hallo! I say, don't curse me—or rather, do curse me—damn me—damn my soul—damn my soul—ha! what am I saying?—who brought me to this? Who? why who but the black and damnable parsons—ay, the parsons and their d—d heretical church! However, I'll have my revenge, for hell is lined with them—paved with them—circled with them; and there I'll find them in burning squads to welcome me—ha! ha! ha! Welcome, Proctor! Tithe-Proctor! God's Perdition! what a name! what a character? Tithe-Proctor!—that is rogue, oppressor, scourge, murderer!—and all for what? For a dead, lazy, gross, overgrown heresy! Ay, lazy parsons that I brought myself to this for, to perdition for! But then I was proud too—oh, it was a great thing to creep up from poverty and cunning to broadcloth and top-boots, to saddle horse, then a jaunting-car, to shake hands with the great parsons, who despised me all the while and made me their tool and scapegoat! Oh, yes, and to have my sons able to hunt in red coats and top-boots, and my daughters to ride on side-saddles—how do you do, gintlemen?—ladies, your most obedient! but, where are we?—what is this? Is this the light of hell, and these the devils with their black faces? And yet, I *did* intend to repent and to be merciful to the poor; and now here comes damnation!—and why? have I not murdered you all?—where am I?—who am I? I am not Matthew Purcel, the Tithe-Proctor, I hope—make *that* clear, and I'll give you—or could it be a dream?—no, no, it is real, a real fact; and the gulf of damnation yawns for me! Ha!—well—come, then, let us die like men; give me the blunderbuss; now, down with the villains—down with the villains!"

His family had been standing between the shelter of two windows, almost transfixed into stone with horror at the blasphemous agonies under which his frantic spirit was raging and writhing. The truth is, that the frightful certainty of death to himself and his family, in such an unprepared state, together with the rapid glance of his ill-spent life, joined to his exertion and the suffocating heat of the room, had, all combined, induced what may be well termed this insane paroxysm of despair and guilt.

On seizing the blunderbuss, he rushed, now distinctly visible in the light, and forgetful that the multitude were on the watch for him, over towards one of the unprotected windows, where he was followed by his son John, for the purpose of being dragged out of danger. He had just discharged the blunderbuss at their leader, who was on the point of making his way to the hall-door, when the ruffian fell stone-dead, and almost simultaneously, he and his son John were literally perforated with a shower of bullets.

"We must die, also," exclaimed Alick to his mother and his sisters; "we must die,—but let us die firmly. Any death, however, is better than one of fire; here we cannot stay longer. Stoop now, so that we may pass that part of the wall that is beneath the windows, until we reach the lower floor; if we expose ourselves only for a moment, we must share their fate. Great God! what a fate and what a night!"

By following his advice, they reached the lower floor in safety, and had scarcely done so, when the burning roof crashed in upon the bodies of the proctor and his son, of whose remains nothing but a few cinders were found the next morning. The falling in of the roof was accompanied by a considerable explosion, owing to the powder which they had left behind them, and the noise of which caused the crowd that was now hemming in the house to pause for a moment, but only for a moment; for they knew now by the explosion, that the ammunition of their enemies was gone, and that "the old fox and his cubs," as they called them, were probably incapable of further resistance; a reflection which, as it stood not in the way

THE SCENES AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CASTLE OF THE "TITHE PROCTOR."—*Tithe Proctor*, 4th chapter.

of their cowardice, seemed to increase their fury.

"Revenge now, boys," shouted a hundred voices; "they have shot our leader along with the rest. Come on then, sledge in the doors an' windies, an' if we lave a single inch of the villains together, may we be hanged like dogs! Come on, then, they are helpless now; their ammunition's gone, an' they can do us no harm. Blood for blood as far as *they* go; it's into inches we must hew them—into inches—come on, then!"

A furious assault instantly commenced at the doors and windows. It was, indeed, a frightful thing to see these men, with their white shirts and black visages, fiercely at work; panting and inflamed with ungovernable rage and vengeance, the red turbid blaze of the burning building lighting them into the similitude of incarnate devils, let loose upon some hellish mission of destruction and blood. Their own fury, however, impeded their progress, for as they passed onwards to the door, urged by the worst passions of man, it was found that their violence, thus broken and diminished by the struggle, had prevented them from making anything like a rapid progress in breaking in the powerfully-fortified door. There was consequently another slight pause, during which a circumstance occurred that added a terrible sublimity to the scene.

We have said, that the sky looked angry and portentous, and such was the fact. During the pauses that now occurred, the distant darkness of the surrounding country was momentarily dispelled by a stronger and more terrific fire than that which now shot up its red and waving pyramids from the burning houses before them. All at once the black sky opened, and from the chasm of angry clouds a sheet of red lightning flashed, lighting up the darkness of the country around them in a fearful manner; but above all things, and what gave a superadded horror to the scene, was the influence which that light, that seemed to proceed from the vengeance of God, had upon that which proceeded from the vengeance of man. The sheeted volume swept down, and for an instant poured over the blazing roofs, the tottering walls, the bleeding corpses and the black-visaged men who stood in multitudes about the place, panting with the mad intoxication of crime; it poured upon them, we say, a light so strong, penetrating, and intense, that its fearful distinctness was enough to paralyze the heart, and awe those who were present from the prosecution of their vengeance. It was, in fact, as if the Almighty Himself had sent down His avenging angel from the heavens, to pour His light upon them, in order to bear testimony against the dreadful work of blood in which they were engaged. Nor was this all. Ere the pause was broken, a burst of thunder, so deep, so loud, and so terrible, in such an hour, pealed from a point of the sky on their right, taking its course in the direction of the proctor's house, where, in one terrific explosion, it seemed to burst exactly over their heads. Some were awed, but we all know that companionship fortifies the heart in the commission of crime, and in a few minutes the Almighty, His fires of vengeance, and His midnight thunders, were all alike forgotten.

The assault on the door was now renewed with, if possible, more ferocious violence; and it became evident to the unfortunate and now helpless inmates, that they must soon fall into the hands of those from whom they could expect no mercy. We say they were in a helpless state; and this was occasioned by the explosion, which left them without ammunition, even if they had had their firearms. Such, however, was their hurry in escaping from the falling roof, joined to the shock and stupor caused by the death of John and his father, that they thought not for a moment of anything but mere self-preservation. Owing to these causes they brought no weapons of defence with them; and now, in consequence of the fallen roof and explosion, their fire-arms were beyond their reach, and useless. They stood now ghastly—their features rigid like those of the dead—calm and without a tremor—but with a melancholy fortitude that was as noble as it was rare and unprecedented. At length Mrs. Purcel spoke:—"Alick," said she, "you must save yourself: we may receive some mercy at the hands of these men, but you will not; hide yourself somewhere, and, when they come in, we will say that you perished with your father and brother."

"No, my dear mother," replied her son, "while I have life I will not separate from you and these dear girls."

"This is madness," observed Julia; "what can you expect? Have we not witnessed bloodshed enough to-night already?—or are you determined that we shall be compelled to witness your murder before our faces? Oh, dear Alick, be advised by my mother; by secreting yourself, you may escape; but if you are found here, you will be instantly shot."

"Dear Alick," said Mary, "by the love you bear us, and by the blood of those whom these murdering ruffians have sacrificed, we implore and entreat you to conceal yourself; and, if that fails—then, by the love of God, do as we desire!"

She had scarcely uttered the last words, when a single Whiteboy, with blackened face, made his appearance at the end of the kitchen stairs, and approached them, waving his hands with a mingled expression of distraction and entreaty.

"Dear John," he exclaimed, "be patient; and Julia, be calm, and hear me. I am," he added, in a low and guarded whisper, "Frank M'Carthy: as you hope for mercy from God and life from man, listen! The door will be broken in in a few minutes; but if you are guided by me, you may yet be safe. Blacken your face forthwith, Alick; and here is a shirt marked with blood too—a circumstance that will give you more security—which I have brought you."

"Frank M'Carthy," exclaimed Julia, "and a Whiteboy! Oh, yes, be advised by him, Alick; as for me, I care not how soon death comes—I have little to live for *now!*"

"If there was time, dear Julia, for explanation, I could soon satisfy you; but, alas! I fear to ask for your father and John."

"They are both murdered, sir," she replied; "they have fallen victims to men who are in the habit of wearing white shirts and black faces — with, I fear, blacker hearts."

"Great God!" he exclaimed, "is this so? but time now is life: I must bear your suspicions, Julia, until a fitter occasion. You, Alick, as you will not and wish not to leave your mother and sisters unprotected, follow me—follow me, or, as I hope for God's mercy, you are lost, and your sisters—I dread to think of it."

"It is enough," said Alick, struck now with absolute impatience: "I consent, Frank—what do you wish?"

He brought him at once to the kitchen, where he took soot from the chimney, which he moistened with water, and, in a couple of minutes, blackened his face and put the bloody shirt over his dress. The change was so completely and quickly effected, that the females for a moment took it for granted that they were strangers who had forced an entrance by some other way.

"Now," said M'Carthy, placing a loaded pistol in Alick's hand, "the pass-word for the night is 'the Cannie Soogah'—you won't forget that?—but, above all things, don't think of using your pistol, whatever may happen, until you hear me shout, 'the Cannie Soogah to the rescue!' and even then, wait until you see and speak to him—the brave, the noble, the glorious fellow!"

"Good God! and is he here?" asked Alick.

"He's here—he's everywhere," replied the other: "he's here, at all events, before now, I hope: the manner in which I shall call upon his name is this—first, I shout 'the Cannie Soogah!' the very mention of which will be followed by a general cheer; then, when he appears, I shall call out, 'the Cannie Soogah to the rescue!' After this you must be guided by me, as I must be by the Cannie Soogah and circumstances. Come, now, it is safer to open the door and admit these ruffians."

"And remember," added Alick, turning with a look of agony to the females, "that the men have *all* been shot, and are lying in the upper room!"

The ruse of M'Carthy succeeded. The Whiteboys, on being admitted, took it for granted that those who opened the door belonged to themselves and had got in by some other entrance. The house was hastily searched; and the fact of the Purcels having been killed in the upper room, was corroborated by the limbs of John and his father being visible among the burning pile. The state of the house now rendered a hasty retreat out of it necessary. A sudden trembling of the walls and upper joists was felt, the crowd rushed out, and the next moment the whole building was one fallen mass of smoking ruins.

The females now found themselves prisoners; but still their brother and M'Carthy kept near them, and seemed to act as a portion of those to whom their guardianship had been entrusted. Julia found herself committed, as if by general consent, to the care of one individual, who kept her a little in advance of the accompanying crowd—to whom, from time to time, he waved his hand without looking behind him to intimate that they should not press close upon them, but afford him an opportuniiy of holding what he wished to be considered some confidential conversation with her.

"That I may be blest, Miss Julia, but you're a lucky girl this night—an' I think I may say that I'm a lucky boy myself. I'm to take care of you, and to bring you to a safe place; which I'll do, never fear. You know what I told you afore about my family—how we wor ever an' always doin' our best against the Sassanach Laws—an ould family it is—an' sure ould blood is betther than riches any day—an' it isn't complexion aither, Miss Julia, that a—this way, darlin'—this way—an' how long now is it since you fell in consate with me? Well, darlin', that I may die a happy death in a good ould age, if I can blame you for not spakin'—especially afther havin' lost your father and two brothers this night. Howandiver, we can have a lob of their wealth, anyhow, yourself and myself—this way, darlin', there's a party of friends

waitin' for us—wisha thin, but I'm lookin' forrid to a happy life wid you—but sure you might say a single word to me, darlin'—jist to let me know you hear me."

Whether Julia heard this one-sided dialogue or not, it is difficult to say. She seemed passive and inattentive, and walked on with an abstracted and mechanical motion. Her brother and lover could only get near her occasionally, having found it necessary to watch her mother and sister also. They could perceive, however, not only that the crowd which followed Mogue appeared to be a good deal in his confidence, and under his sway, but that it increased so rapidly as he went along, that they became alarmed, especially as the *Cannie Soogah* had not yet made his appearance.

At this moment they were met by a body of men, who on looking at Mogue and Julia, exclaimed, "You are bringing her the wrong way—you are breakin' your ordhers—you know that our captain laid it out, that you should bring her in the other direction, and to where the guard is waitin' for her."

"Ay," replied Mogue, "but you know our captain had been shot, and is lyin' stiff inside the gate there behind us."

"But livin' or dead," they replied, "do you observe your duty—it's a bad an' dangerous example you're settin'."

"But sure if the captain was alive," said Mogue, "it 'ud be a different thing—that I may be happy, but I'm bringin' her the right way, and to the right place, too—amn't I, boys?" he exclaimed, turning to his followers.

"All's right!" they replied; "to be sure you are—go on, and more powers!"

About a minute or two before this, a mounted Whitefoot had rode up, and having heard the words, he replied to Mogue, in a loud voice, "No, sir! our captain is not shot, but is safe and sound." And scarcely had the words proceeded from his lips when the very individual, as it seemed, who had led them during the night, galloped up to the place of altercation.

"Who says I am dead," said he; "I don't look like a dead man, I think. Meek way there till I speak to this man," pointing to Mogue. "Why, sir, did you dare to disobey ordhers by taking this lady to the wrong place? Answer me that?"

Mogue, seeing that his support was now powerful, looked at them, and asked aloud —"Am I bringin' the lady the wrong way, boys?"

"No," they replied; "Go on, and more power!"

At this moment M'Carthy shouted out in loud and powerful tones—"The Cannie Soogah!" and the words were no sooner uttered than Mogue started, a rapid stir and murmur pervaded the multitude, and almost instantly a most hearty and vociferous cheer awakened the echoes that slept among the neighboring hills. The moment this had subsided, the same voice repeated the name with an addition—"The Cannie Soogah to the rescue—here he is!"

Our facetious friend, for it was he, threw up his hand in a peculiar manner, that made the act understood by all present, with the exception of M'Carthy and Alick Purcel.

"Yes, boys," he exclaimed, "I am here; and I thank you for your kindness. You have had a full revenge to-night on Purcel and his family; but, as I have been a long time in search of a good wife, I suppose you have no objection that I should take charge of the ladies.

These words were followed by another astounding cheer, and the Cannie, riding over to the spot where Mrs. Purcel and her daughter stood—for she and Mary had now joined Julia—was about to speak to them, when the report of a pistol was heard, and at the same moment a bullet whizzed past his ear.

"Treachery!" he shouted, "treachery against your commander! Seize upon that person, in the name of Captain Right."

His words came late; another report followed the first, with an interval of less than a quarter of a minute between them, and instantly our pious friend, who had flattered himself with the prospect of a long and happy life in the possession of Julia Purcel, fell stone-dead to the earth.

"What!" shouted the Cannie, "is this more treachery? But wait, I'll soon cure this."

He put a horn to his lips as he spoke, and having given it a sharp, quick, and hasty blast, he nodded his head, as much as to say, "Wait a moment."

"The last shot wasn't threachery anyhow," exclaimed Jerry Joyce, whose voice Alick immediately recognized; "somebody," he added, with a significant look, "has ped honest Mogue for his."

"Is he dead?" asked the Cannie.

"He is dead, captain," replied several, "and so may every one die that's a traitor to the Cannie Soogah—our bold Captain Right."

A body of about a thousand men now made their appearance, every one of them personally devoted to the Cannie Soogah; and brought there for the humane purpose, if possible, of saving Purcel and his sons that night.

"It was a false alarm, my friends," said he, as they came up; "there was only one

traitor among them, and he has been brought to his account. I didn't wish for his death, and he might have got some other punishment, but it can't be helped now; I'm only sorry for the false-hearted vagabond because he wasn't fit to die."

He then, after a few words of advice, dismissed them to their respective homes, with the exception of a certain number of faithful followers, whom he retained for the purpose of assisting him to escort Mrs. Purcel and her daughters to the house of our worthy magistrate. Another body he also appointed to the task of carrying the dead and wounded away to some remote place, where they could be interred, or so concealed that their indentification might not involve their surviving relatives.

Our narrative, we may say, is closed. The Cannie now having placed Mrs. Purcel and her daughters on horseback, directed his friends to proceed to the residence of the redoubtable Fitzy O'Driscol, who was by no means prepared for seeing such a number of Whiteboys about his house. Alick Purcel and M'Carthy also got horses, and as they went along, M'Carthy received from him a solution to the mysterious occurrences in which he had been involved.

"Mr. Purcel's family," said he, but not in hearing of the females, "is the last family that I ought to protect this night." They have shot my twin brother, the man that went by the name of Buck English. He is now gone to his reckonin' and may God forgive him! He was tried and found guilty of murdher in the county of Cork, and the worst of it was that it was in the act of robbin' a gentleman's house that the murdher was committed. While he was in gaol I contrived to get into him, and we managed so well that he escaped, and I was kept in his place. The next day I tould them the truth, and he was taken again; but it seems that the gintleman that prosecuted, on hearin' that there was another person so like him, felt unaisy in his mind and got him off for the murdher, in dread he might have sworn against the wrong man. He couldn't keep himself quiet though, for, on the very day before his pardon came, he was caught, along wid some others, in the act of breakin' out of the gaol, and for that he got a severe wound and seven years' transportation. All our lives, I and my other brother——"

"Why, have you another brother, Cannie?" asked M'Carthy.

"Troth, and I have; and you may thank God that I have, or it isn't here but in heaven, I hope, you'd be this night. Well, as I was sayin', I an' my other brother spent our whole life in tryin' to defate him in his plans and skames—may God forgive him! We often did, but not always; for sometimes he was too many for both of us."

"But, Cannie, about the night I was in Frank Finnerty's, who was it that saved my life twice?"

"One of them—he that wounded the fellows—I don't wish to name—but, indeed, I'm crippled here, bekaise you know, gintlemen, that there are laws in the land. A friend to your family met Mogue Moylan, and, suspectin' what was in the wind, sent that friend to assist you, and it was by volunteerin' to take your life that he was able to save you. My brother, afther meetin' him, and hearin' from him what happened, was the man that met you aftherwards, that gave you the passwords, and showed you how to open the windey. There were others there that knew you, for I hope *you* don't think that every man goin' out at night wid a white shirt and a black face on him is a murdherer."

"God forbid!" said M'Carthy, "I've been disguised by both myself, as it happens. It is difficult, however, for any country to be happy, or any people either industrious or moral, when such secret confederacies are made the standard of both law and morality."

"That's thruth, Mr. M'Carthy, and no man knows it betther than I do; I and my brother—not him that's gone to his account to night, but the other—were forced to join them for our own safety, but, as long as we wor of them, we endeavored to do as much good—that is, to prevent as much evil—as we could. It was I that sent you, Mr. M'Carthy, the letter to Dublin, and it was I that sent the messenger for you this evenin'; I took it for granted that if you had remained in Mr. Purcel's you'd been shot, and, besides, I wanted you to watch Mogue Moylan, for I had raison to know that he intended to play a trick on me to night in regard to Miss Julia. I had my doubts all along whether I could come in time to save the whole family and defate my brother, and I could not, for I had an immense number of my own men to get together; however, God's will be done; I did all that lay in my power."

On reaching Nassau Lodge, the party anticipated some danger from Fergus O'Driscol's fire-arms. Alick, however, knocked, and on hearing the window open, exclaimed:—

"Don't be alarmed, Fergus, we are friends. My mother and sisters are here, and wish to get in. This has been a dreadful night!—a night of bloodshed and murder!"

"My God!" exclaimed Fergus, "what is this you tell me? But why, Alick, are you surrounded by such a number of Whiteboys? I can see distinctly that they are such by the light of the moon."

"Boys," said the Cannie Soogah, "disperse now—and thank you; I feel your kindness, and I won't forget it—you see the people of the house are alarmed—but that's not the worst of it—what," he added, with a peculiar smile, "if you bring that terrible dare-divil, O'Driscol, upon you!"

The crowd immediately dispersed, and in a few minutes the melancholy group were admitted to the welcome shelter of the magistrate's hospitable roof; for such, in fact, it was.

We do not intend to dwell upon this melancholy meeting of the neighboring families, nor upon the heart-rending details which were given of the dreadful circumstances that made that night so hideous. All the O'Driscols were present, and deeply participated in the affliction of the late proctor's family, with the exception of the magistrate himself, who, much to their astonishment, was not forthcoming. Every successive moment, however, he was looked for; but as he did not, after an unusual period of expectation, make his appearance, some alarm began to be felt, which gradually increased, especially on the part of his daughter, until she proposed that a search should be made for him. This was accordingly done, when —but let it not reach the ears of his friend the Castle, he was discovered somewhat in the position of Philosopher Square, behind Molly Seagrim's curtain, squatted upon his hunkers, as they say, in the furthest and darkest corner of the coal hole.

In about half an hour after this discovery, a knock came to the door, and it was intimated to Alick Purcel and M'Carthy, that the Cannie Soogah wished to see them for a minute or two,—but that he declined coming in.

"Gentlemen," said he, when they came to the hall-door, "I have made up my mind since I left you awhile ago, and I'm come to bid you both farewell. This at present is not a paceful country to live in, and I'm tired of the work that's goin' on in it. I'm now come to bid you both farewell, and my brother is goin' along wid me. The other will be laid in his grave this night. I wish, Mr. Purcel, I could a' done more for your family; but what's done can't be undone. Farewell, then," said he, and, as he spoke, his voice was filled with deep but manly emotion—"Farewell to you both! When you think of me, let it be kindly, for from this night out you will never see the *Cannie Soogah* more."

He put his two hands upon his face, gave a sob or two, and immediately departed at a rapid pace, and never was seen in the country afterwards.

It is necessary to say now that Alick Purcel and his beloved Miss O'Driscol were united;—that M'Carthy, in due time, after having been called to the bar, was made happy in the possession of Julia Purcel; and that Jerry Joyce, in imitation of his betters, was blessed by the hand and honest heart of Letty Lenehan.

THE EMIGRANTS OF AHADARRA.

CHAPTER I.

A strong Farmer's Establishment and Family.

It was one summer morning, about nine o'clock, when a little man, in the garb and trim of a mendicant, accompanied by a slender but rather handsome looking girl about sixteen, or it may be a year more, were upon their way to the house of a man, who, from his position in life, might be considered a wealthy agriculturist, and only a step or two beneath the *condition* of a gentleman farmer, although much more plain and rustic in his manners. The house and place had about them that characteristic appearance of abundance and slovenly neglect which is, unfortunately, almost peculiar to our country. The house was a long slated one, and stood upon a little eminence, about three or four hundred yards from the highway. It was approached by a broad and ragged boreen or mock avenue, as it might be called, that was in very good keeping with the premises to which it led. As you entered it from the road, you had to pass through an iron gate, which it was a task to open, and which, when opened, it was another task to shut. In consequence of this difficulty, foot passengers had made themselves a way upon each side of it, through which they went to and came from the house; and in this they were sanctioned by the example of the family themselves, who, so long as these side paths were passable, manifested as much reluctance to open or close the gate as any one else.

The month was May; and nothing could be more delightful and exhilarating than the breeze which played over the green fields that were now radiant with the light which was flooded down upon them from the cloudless sun. Around them, in every field, were the tokens of that pleasant labor from which the hopes of ample and abundant harvests always spring. Here, fixed in the ground, stood the spades of a *boon** of laborers, who, as was evident from that circumstance, were then at breakfast; in another place might be seen the plough and a portion of the tackle lying beside it, being expressive of the same fact. Around them, on every side, in hedges, ditches, green fields, and meadows, the birds seemed animated into joyous activity or incessant battle, by the business of nest-building or love. Whilst all around, from earth and air, streamed the ceaseless voice of universal melody and song.

On reaching the gate, Peety Dhu and his pretty daughter turned up towards the house we have alluded to—which was the residence of a man named Burke. On reaching it they were observed by a couple of large dogs, who, partaking of the hospitable but neglected habits of the family, first approached and looked at them for a moment, then wagged their tails by way of welcome, and immediately scampered off into the kitchen to forage for themselves.

Burke's house and farmyard, though strongly indicative of wealth and abundance in the owner, were, notwithstanding, evidently the property of a man whose mind was far back in a knowledge of agriculture, and the industrial pursuits that depend upon it. His haggard was slovenly in the extreme, and his farmyard exceedingly offensive to most of the senses; everthing lay about in a careless and neglected manner;—wheel-barrows without their trundles—sacks for days under the rain that fell from the eaves of the houses—other implements embedded in mud—car-houses tumbling down—the pump without a handle—the garden-gate open, and the pigs hard at work destroying the vegetables, and rooting up the garden in all directions. In fact, the very animals about the house were conscious of the character of the people, and acted accordingly. If one of the dogs, for instance, was hunted at the pigs, he ran in an apparent fury towards that which happened to be nearest him, which merely lifted its head and listened for a time—the dog, with loud and boisterous barking, seizing its ear, led it along for three or four yards in that position, after which, upon the pig demurring to proceed any further, he very quietly dropped it and trotted in again, leaving the destructive animal to resume its depredations.

* A considerable number of men working together.

The house inside bore the same character. Winter and summer the hall-door, which had long lost the knocker, lay hospitably open. The parlor had a very equivocal appearance; for the furniture, though originally good and of excellent materials, was stained and dinged and hacked in a manner that denoted but litle sense of care or cleanliness. Many of the chairs, although not worn by age, wanted legs or backs, evidently from ill-usage alone—the grate was without fire-irons—a mahogany bookcase that stood in a recess to the right of the fireplace, with glass doors and green silk blinds, had the glass all broken and the silk stained almost out of its original color; whilst inside of it, instead of books, lay a heterogeneous collection of garden seeds in brown paper—an almanac of twenty years' standing, a dry ink-bottle, some broken delf, and a large collection of blue-moulded shoes and boots, together with an old blister of French flies, the lease of their farm, and a great number of their receipts for rent. To crown all, the clock in the other recess stood cobwebbed about the top, deprived of the minute hand, and seeming to intimate by its silence that it had given note of time's progress to this idle and negligent family to no purpose.

On the drawing-room stairs there lay what had once been a carpet, but so inseparable had been their connection that the stairs were now worn through it, and it required a sharp eye to distinguish such fragments of it as remained from the color of the dirty boards it covered and the dust that lay on both.

On entering the kitchen, Peety and his little girl found thirteen or fourteen, in family laborers and servants of both sexes, seated at a long deal table, each with a large wooden noggin of buttermilk and a spoon of suitable dimensions, digging as if for a wager into one or other of two immense wooden bowls of stirabout, so thick and firm in consistency that, as the phrase goes, a man might dance on it. This, however, was not the only picture of such enjoyment that the kitchen afforded. Over beside the dresser was turned upon one side the huge pot in which the morning meal had been made, and at the bottom of which, inside of course, a spirit of rivalry equally vigorous and animated, but by no means so harmonious, was kept up by two dogs and a couple of pigs, which were squabbling and whining and snarling among each other, whilst they tugged away at the scrapings, or *residuum*, that was left behind after the stirabout had been emptied out of it. The whole kitchen, in fact, had a strong and healthy smell of food—the dresser, a huge one, was covered with an immense quantity of pewter, wood, and delf; and it was only necessary to cast one's eye towards the chimney to perceive, by the weighty masses of black hung beef and the huge sides and flitches of deep yellow bacon which lined it, that plenty and abundance, even to overflowing, predominated in the family.

The "chimney-brace" projected far out over the fire-place towards the floor, and under it on each side stretched two long hobs or chimney corner seats, on which nearly a dozen persons could sit of a winter evening. Mrs. Burke, a smart, good-looking little woman, though somewhat advanced in years, kept passing in a kind of perpetual motion from one part of the house to the other, with a large bunch of bright keys jingling at one side, and a huge house-wife pocket, with a round pin-cushion dangling beside it, at the other. Jemmy Burke himself, a placid though solemn-faced man, was sitting on the hob in question complacently smoking his pipe, whilst over the glowing remnants of an immense turf fire hung a singing kettle, and beside it on three crushed coals was the tea-pot, "waitin'," as the servants were in the habit of expressing it, "for the masther and misthress's breakfast."

Peety, who was well known and a great favorite on his rounds, received a warm and hospitable welcome from Jemmy Burke, who made him and the girl sit upon the hob, and immediately ordered them breakfast.

"Here, Nancy Devlin, get Peety and the *girsha* their skinfuls of stirabout an' milk. Sit over to the fire, alanna, an' warm yourself."

"Warm, *inagh!*" replied Peety; "why, sure it's not a fire sich a blessed mornin' as this she'd want—an' a blessed mornin' it is, glory be to God!"

"Troth, an' you're right, sure enough, Peety," replied the good-natured farmer; "a blessed saison it is for gettin' down the crops. Go over there, now, you an' the *girsha*, to that other table, an'—whish!—kick them pigs an' dogs out o' the house, an' be d—d to them! One can't hear their ears for them—you an' the *girsha*, an' let us see what you can do. Nancy, achora, jist dash a *gawliogue* o' sweet milk into their noggins—they're not like us that's well fed every day—it's but seldom they get the likes, the creatures—so dash in a brave *gawliogue* o' the sweet milk for them. Take your time, Peety,—aisy, alanna, 'till you get what I'm sayin'; it'll nourish an' put strinth in you."

"Ah, Misther Burke," replied Peety, in a tone of gratitude peculiar to his class, "you're the ould* man still—ever an' always the large

* That is to say, the same man still.

heart an' lavish hand—an' so sign's on it—full an' plinty upon an' about you—an' may it ever be so wid you an' yours, *a chierna*, I pray! An' how is the misthress, sir?"

"Throth, she's very well, Peety—has no raison to complain, thank God!"

"Thank God, indeed! and betther may she be, is my worst wish to her—an' Masther Hycy, sir?—but I needn't ax how he is. Isn't the whole country ringin' wid his praises;—the blessin' o' God an you, acushla"—this was to Nancy Devlin, on handing them the new milk—"draw over, darlin', nearer to the table—there now"—this to his daughter, whom he settled affectionately to her food. "Ay, indeed," he proceeded, "sure there's only the one word of it over the whole Barony we're sittin' in—that there's neither fetch nor fellow for him through the whole parish. Some people, indeed, say that Bryan M'Mahon comes near him; but only some, for it's given up to Masther Hycy all to pieces."

"Faix, an' I for one, although I'm his father—amn't I, Rosha?" he added, good-humoredly addressing his wife, who had just come into the kitchen from above stairs.

"Throth," said the wife, who never replied with good humor unless when addressed as *Mrs. Burke*, "you're ill off for something to speak about. How are you, Peety? an' how is your little girl?"

"In good health, ma'am, thank God an' you; an' very well employed at the present time, thanks to you still!"

To this Mrs. Burke made no reply; for it may be necessary to state here, that although she was not actually penurious or altogether without hospitality, and something that might occasionally be termed charity, still it is due to honest Jemmy to inform the reader in the outset, that, as Peety Dhu said, "the large heart and the lavish hand" were especially his own. Mrs. Burke was considered to have been handsome—indeed, a kind of rustic beauty in her day—and, like many of that class, she had not been without a due share of vanity, or perhaps we might say coquetry, if we were to speak the truth. Her teeth were good, and she had a very pretty dimple in one of her cheeks when she smiled, two circumstances which contributed strongly to sustain her good humor, and an unaccountable tendency to laughter, when the poverty of the jest was out of all proportion to the mirth that followed it. Notwithstanding this apparently light and agreeable spirit, she was both vulgar and arrogant, and labored under the weak and ridiculous ambition of being considered a woman of high pretensions, who had been most unfortunately thrown away, if not altogether lost, upon a husband whom she considered as every way unworthy of her. Her father had risen into the possession of some unexpected property when it was too late to bestow upon her a suitable education, and the consequence was that, in addition to natural vanity, on the score of beauty, she was a good deal troubled with purse-pride, which, with a foolish susceptibility of flattery, was a leading feature in her disposition. In addition to this, she was an inveterate and incurable slattern, though a gay and lively one; and we need scarcely say that whatever she did in the shape of benevolence or charity, in most instances owed its origin to the influences of the weaknesses she was known to possess.

Breakfast, at length, was over, and the laborers, with an odd hiccup here and there among them, from sheer repletion, got their hats and began to proceed towards the farm.

"Now, boys," said Jemmy, after dropping a spittle into his pipe, pressing it down with his little finger, and putting it into his waistcoat pocket, "see an' get them praties down as soon as you can, an' don't work as if you intended to keep your Christmas there; an' Paddy the Bounce, I'll thank you to keep your jokes an' your stories to yourself, an' not to be idlin' the rest till afther your work's done. Throth it was an unlucky day I had anything to do wid you, you divartin' vagabone—ha! ha! ha! When I hired him in the Micklemas fair," proceeded Jemmy, without addressing himself to any particular individual, "he killed me wid laughin' to such a degree, that I couldn't refuse the *veehony* whatsomever wages he axed; an' now he has the men, insteed o' mindin' their work, dancin' through the field, an' likely to split at the fun he tells them, ha! ha! ha! Be off, now, boys. Pether Murphy, you randletree, let the girl alone. That's it Peggy, lay on him; ha! devil's cure to you! take what you've got any way—you desarve it."

These latter observations were occasioned by a romping match that took place between a young laborer and a good-looking girl who was employed to drop potatoes for the men.

At length those who were engaged in the labor of the field departed in a cheerful group, and in a few minutes the noise of a horse's feet, evidently proceeding at a rapid trot, was heard coming up the *boreen* or avenue towards the house.

"Ay," exclaimed Burke, with a sigh, "there comes Hycy at a trot, an' the wondher is it's not a gallop. That's the way he'll get through life, I fear; an' if God doesn't change him he's more likely to gallop himself to the Staff an' Bag* than to any-

* Beggary.

thing else I know of. I can't nor I won't stand his extravagance—but it's his mother's fault, an' she'll see what it'll come to in the long run.

He had scarcely concluded when his son entered the kitchen, alternately singing and whistling the Foxhunter's jig in a manner that betokened exuberant if not boisterous spirits. He was dressed in top boots, a green riding-coat, yellow waistcoat, and drab cassimere small clothes — quite in jockey trim, in fact.

Hycy rather resembled his father in the lineaments of his face, and was, consequently, considered handsome. He was about the middle size, and remarkably well proportioned. In fact, it would be exceedingly difficult to find a young fellow of manlier bearing or more striking personal attractions. His features were regular, and his complexion fresh and youthful looking, and altogether there was in his countenance and whole appearance a cheerful, easy, generous, unreflecting *dash* of character that not only made him a favorite on first acquaintance, but won confidence by an openness of manner that completely disarmed suspicion. It might have been observed, however, that his laugh, like his mother's, never, or at least seldom, came directly from the heart, and that there was a hard expression about his otherwise well-formed mouth, such as rarely indicated generosity of feeling, or any acquaintance with the kinder impulses of our nature. He was his mother's pet and favorite, and her principal wish was that he should be looked upon and addressed as a gentleman, and for that purpose she encouraged him to associate with those only whose rank and position in life rendered any assumption of equality on his part equally arrogant and obtrusive. In his own family his bearing towards his parents was, in point of fact, the reverse of what it ought to have been. He not only treated his father with something bordering on contempt, but joined his mother in all that ignorant pride which kept her perpetually bewailing the fate by which she was doomed to become his wife. Nor did she herself come off better at his hands. Whilst he flattered her vanity, and turned her foibles to his own advantage, under the guise of a very dutiful affection, his deportment towards her was marked by an ironical respect, which was the more indefensible and unmanly because she could not see through it. The poor woman had taken up the opinion, that difficult and unintelligible language was one test of a gentleman; and her son by the use of such language, let no opportunity pass of confirming her in this opinion, and establishing his own claims to the character.

"Where did you ride to this morning, Misther Hycy?"

"Down to take a look at Tom Burton's mare, Crazy Jane, ma'am:—

"'Away, my boys, to horse away,
The Chase admits of no delay—'"

"Tom Burton!" re-echoed the father, with a groan; "an so you're in Tom Burton's hands! A swindlin', horse-dalin' scoundrel, that would chate St. Pether. Hycy, my man, if you go to look for wool to Tom you'll come home shorn."

"'Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
That there's wrath and despair—'

Thank you, father — much obliged; you entertain a good opinion of me."

"Do I, faith? Don't be too sure of that."

"I've bought her at any rate," said Hycy —"thirty-five's the figure; but she's a dead bargain at fifty."

"Bought her!" exclaimed the father; "an' how, in God's name, do you expect to pay for her?"

"By an order on a very excellent, worthy man and gentleman-farmer—ycleped James Burke, Esquire—who has the honor of being father to that ornament of the barony, Hycy Burke, the accomplished. My worthy sire will fork out."

"If I do, that I may—"

"Silence, poor creature!" said his wife, clapping her hand upon his mouth—"make no rash or vulgar oaths. Surely, Misther Burke—"

"How often did I bid you not to *misther* me? Holy scrapers, am I to be misthered and pesthered this way, an' my name plane Jemmy Burke!"

"You see, Hycy, the vulgarian will come out," said his mother. "I say, Misther Burke, are you to see your son worse mounted at the Herringstown Hunt than any other gentleman among them? Have you no pride?"

"No, thank God! barrin' that I'm an honest man an' no gentleman; an', as for Hycy, Rosha—"

"*Mrs. Burke*, father, if you please," interposed Hycy; "remember who your wife is at all events."

"Faith, Hycy, she'll come better off if I forget that same; but I tell you that instead of bein' the laughin'-stock of the same Hunt, it's betune the stilts of a plough you ought to be, or out in the fields keepin' the men to their business."

"I paid three guineas earnest money, at all events," said the son; "but 'it matters not,' as the preacher says—

"'When I was at home I was merry and frisky,
My dad kept a pig and my mother sold whiskey'—

Beg pardon, mother, no allusion—my word and honor none—to *you* I mean—

"'My uncle was rich, but would never be aisy
Till I was enlisted by Corporal Casey.'

Fine times in the army, Mr. Burke, with every prospect of a speedy promotion. Mother, my stomach craves its matutinal supply—I'm in excellent condition for breakfast."

"It's ready. Jemmy, you'll—Misther Burke, I mane—you'll pay for Misther Hycy's mare."

"If I do—you'll live to see it, that's all. Give the boy his breakwhist."

"Thank you, worthy father—much obliged for your generosity—

"'Oh, love is the soul of a nate Irishman—
He loves all that's lovely, loves all that he can,
With his sprig of—'

Ah, Peety Dhu, how are you, my worthy peripatetic? Why, this daughter of yours is getting quite a Hebe on our hands. Mrs. Burke, breakfast—breakfast, madam, as you love Hycy, the accomplished." So saying, Hycy the accomplished proceeded to the parlor we have described, followed by his maternal relative, as he often called his mother.

"Well, upon my word and honor, mother," said the aforesaid Hycy, who knew and played upon his mother's weak points, "it is a sad thing to see such a woman as you are, married to a man who has neither the spirit nor feelings of a gentleman—my word and honor it is."

"I feel that, Hycy, but there's no help for spilt milk; we must only make the best of a bad bargain. Are *you* coming to your breakfast," she shouted, calling to honest Jemmy, who still sat on the hob ruminating with a kind of placid vexation over his son's extravagance—"your tay's filled out!"

"There let it," he replied, "I'll have none of your plash to-day; I tuck my skinful of good stiff stirabout that's worth a shipload of it. Drink it yourselves—I'm no gintleman,"

"Arrah, when did you find that out, Misther Burke?" she shouted back again.

"To his friends and acquaintances it is anything but a recent discovery," added Hycy; and each complimented the observation of the other with a hearty laugh, during which the object of it went out to the fields to join the men.

"I'm afraid it's no go, mother," proceeded the son, when breakfast was finished—"he won't stand it. Ah, if both my parents were of the same geometrical proportion, there would be little difficulty in this business; but upon my honor and reputation, my dear mother, I think between you and me that my father's a gross abstraction—a most substantial and ponderous apparition."

"An' didn't I know that an' say that too all along?" replied his mother, catching as much of the high English from him as she could manage: "however, lave the enumeration of the mare to me. It'll go hard or I'll get it out of him."

"It is done," he replied; "your stratagetic powers are great, my dear mother, consequently it is left in your hands."

Hycy, whilst in the kitchen, cast his eye several times upon the handsome young daughter of Peety Dhu, a circumstance to which we owe the instance of benevolent patronage now about to be recorded.

"Mother," he proceeds, "I think it would be a charity to rescue that interesting little girl of Peety Dhu's from a life of mendicancy."

"From a what?" she asked, staring at him.

"Why," he replied, now really anxious to make himself understood—"from the disgraceful line of life he's bringin' her up to. You should take her in and provide for her."

"When I do, Hycy," replied his mother, bridling, "it won't be a beggar's daughter nor a niece of Philip Hogan's—sorrow bit."

"As for her being a niece of Hogan's, you know it is by his mother's side; but wouldn't it be a feather in her cap to get under the protection of a highly respectable woman, though? The patronage of a person like you, Mrs. Burke, would be the making of her—my word and honor it would."

"Hem!—ahem!—do you think so, Hycy?"

"Tut, mother—that indeed!—can there be a doubt about it?"

"Well then, in that case, I think she may stay—that is, if the father will consent to it."

"Thank you, mother, for that example of protection and benevolence. I feel that all my virtues certainly proceed from your side of the house and are derived from yourself—there can be no doubt of that."

"Indeed I think so myself, Hycy, for where else would you get them? You have the M'Swiggin nose; an' it can't be from any one else you take your high notions. All you show of the gentleman, Hycy, it's not hard to name them you have it from, I believe."

"Spoken like a Sybil. Mother, within the whole range of my female acquaintances I don't know a woman that has in her so much of the gentleman as yourself—my word and honor, mother."

"Behave, Hycy—behave now," she replied, simpering; "however truth's truth, at any rate."

We need scarcely say that the poor mendicant was delighted at the notion of having his daughter placed in the family of so warm and independent a man as Jemmy Burke. Yet the poor little fellow did not separate from the girl without a strong manifestation of the affection he bore her. She was his only child—the humble but solitary flower that blossomed for him upon the desert of life.

"I lave her wid you," he said, addressing Mrs. Burke with tears in his eyes, "as the only treasure an' happiness I have in this world. She is the poor man's lamb, as I have hard read out of Scripture wanst; an' in lavin' her undher your care, I lave all my little hopes in this world wid her. I trust, ma'am, you'll guard her an' look afther her as if she was one of your own."

This unlucky allusion might have broken up the whole contemplated arrangement, had not Hycy stepped in to avert from Peety the offended pride of the patroness.

"I hope, Peety," he said, "that you are fully sensible of the honor Mrs. Burke does you and your daughter by taking the girl under her protection and patronage?"

"I am, God knows."

"And of the advantage it is to get her near so respectable a woman—so *highly* respectable a woman?"

"I am, in troth."

"And that it may be the making of your daughter's fortune?"

"It may, indeed, Masther Hycy."

"And that there's no other woman of high respectability in the parish capable of elevating her to the true principles of double and simple proportion?"

"No, in throth, sir, I don't think there is."

"Nor that can teach her the newest theories in dogmatic theology and metaphysics, together with the whole system of Algebraic Equations if the girl should require them?"

"Divil another woman in the barony can match her at them by all accounts," replied Peety, catching the earnest enthusiasm of Hycy's manner.

"That will do, Peety; you see yourself, mother," he added, taking her aside and speaking in a low voice, "that the little fellow knows right well the advantages of having her under your care and protection; and ti's very much to his credit, and speaks very highly for his metempsychosis that he does so—hem!"

"He was always a daicent, sinsible, poor creature of his kind," replied his mother; "besides, Hycy, between you and me, she'll be more than worth her bit."

"There now, Peety," said her son, turning towards the mendicant; "it's all settled—wait now for a minute till I write a couple of notes, which you must deliver for me."

Peety sat accordingly, and commenced to lay down for his daughter's guidance and conduct such instructions as he deemed suitable to the situation she was about to enter, and the new duties that necessarily devolved upon her.

In due time Hycy appeared, and placing two letters in Peety's hands, said—"Go, Peety, to Gerald Cavanagh's, of Fenton's Farm, and if you can get an opportuity, slip that note into Kathleen's hands—this, mark, with the corner turned down—you won't forget that?"

"No, sir."

"Very well—you're then to proceed to Tom M'Mahon's, and if you find Bryan, his son, there, give him this; and if he's at the mountain farm of Ahadarra, go to him. I don't expect an answer from Kathleen Cavanagh, but I do from Bryan M'Mahon; and mark me, Peety."

"I do, sir."

"Are you sure you do?"

"Sartin, sir."

"Silent as the grave then is the word in both cases—but if I ever hear—"

"That's enough, Masther Hycy; when the grave spakes about it so will I."

Peety took the letters and disappeared with an air rendered important by the trust reposed in him; whilst Mrs. Burke looked inquiringly at her son, as if her curiosity were a good deal excited.

"One of them is to Kate or Kathleen Cavanagh, as they call her," said Hycy, in reply to her looks; "and the other for Bryan M'Mahon, who is soft and generous—*probatum est.* I want to know if he'll stand for thirty-five—and as for Kate, I'm making love to her, you must know."

"Kathleen Cavanagh," replied his mother; "I'll never lend my privileges to sich a match."

"Match!" exclaimed Hycy, coolly.

"Ah," she replied warmly; "match or marriage will never—"

"Marriage!" he repeated, "why, my most amiable maternal relative, do you mean to insinuate to Hycy the accomplished, that he is obliged to propose either match or marriage to every girl he makes love to? What

a prosaic world you'd have of it, my dear Mrs. Burke. This, ma'am, is only an agreeable flirtation—not but that it's possible there *may* be something in the shape of a noose matrimonial dangling in the background. She combines, no doubt, in her unrivalled person, the qualities of Hebe, Venus, and Diana—Hebe in youth, Venus in beauty, and Diana in wisdom; so it's said, but I trust incorrectly, as respects *one* of them—good-bye, mother—try your influence as touching Crazy Jane, and report favorably—

"'Friend of my soul, this goblet sip,
'Twill chase the pensive tear, &c.'"

CHAPTER II.

Gerald Cavanagh and his Family—Tom M'Mahon's Return from Dublin.

THE house of Gerald Cavanagh, though not so large as that of our kind-hearted friend, Jemmy Burke, was a good specimen of what an Irish farmer's residence *ought* to be. It was distant from Burke's somewhat better than two miles, and stood almost immediately inside the highway, upon a sloping green that was vernal through the year. It was in the cottage style, in the form of a cross, with a roof ornamentally thatched, and was flanked at a little distance by the office-houses. The grass was always so close on this green, as to have rather the appearance of a well kept lawn. The thorn-trees stood in front of it, clipped in the shape of round tables, on one of which, exposed to all weathers, might be seen a pair of large churn-staves, bleached into a white, fresh color, that caused a person to long for the butter they made. On the other stood a large cage, in which was imprisoned a blackbird, whose extraordinary melody had become proverbial in the neighborhood. Down a little to the right of the hall-door, a pretty winding gravelled pathway led to a clear spring well that was overshadowed by a spreading white-thorn; and at each gable stood a graceful elder or mountain-ash, whose red berries during the autumn had a fine effect, and contrasted well with the mass of darker and larger trees, by which the back portion of the house and the offices was almost concealed. Both the house and green were in an elevated position, and commanded a delightful expanse of rich meadows to the extent of nearly one hundred acres, through which a placid river wound its easy way, like some contented spirit that glides calmly and happily through the gentle vicissitudes of an untroubled life.

As Peety Dhu, whilst passing from the residence of our friend Jemmy Burke to that of Gerald Cavanagh, considered himself in his vocation, the reader will not be surprised to hear that it was considerably past noon when he arrived at Fenton's Farm; for by this name the property was known on a portion of which the Cavanaghs lived. It might be about the hours of two or three o'clock, when Peety, on arriving at the gate which led into Cavanagh's house, very fortunately saw his daughter Kathleen, in the act of feeding the blackbird aforementioned; and prudently deeming this the best opportunity of accomplishing his mission, he beckoned her to approach him. The good-natured girl did so: saying at the same time—"What is the matter, Peety?—do you want me? Won't you come into the kitchen?"

"Thank you, avourneen, but I can't; I did want you, but it was only to give you this letther. I suppose *it* will tell you all. Oh, thin, is it any wondher that you should get it, an' that half the parish should be dyin' in love wid you? for, in troth, it's enough to make an ould man feel young agin even to look at you. I was afraid they might see me givin' you the letther from the windy, and that's what made me sign to you to come to me here. Good-bye *a colleen dhas*"*—an' it's you that's *that* sure enough."

The features, neck, and bosom of the girl, on receiving this communication, were overspread with one general blush, and she stood, for a few moments, irresolute and confused. In the mean time Peety had passed on, and after a pause of a few minutes, she looked at the letter more attentively, and slowly broke it open. It was probably the first epistle she had ever received, and we need scarcely say that, as a natural consequence, she was by no means quick in deciphering written hand. Be this as it may, after having perused a few lines she started, looked at the bottom for the name, then at the letter again; and as her sister Hanna joined her, that brow on which a frown had been seldom ever seen to sit, was now crimson with indignation.

"Why, gracious goodness!" exclaimed Hanna, "what is this, Kathleen? Something has vexed you!—ha! a love-letter, too! In airnest, what ails you? an' who is the letter from, if it's fair to ax?"

"The letter is not for me," replied Kathleen, putting it into her sister's hand, "but when you read it you won't wonder that I'm angry."

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* Pretty girl.

As Hanna began to go slowly through it, she first laughed, but on proceeding a little further her brow also reddened, and her whole features expressed deep and unequivocal resentment. Having concluded the perusal of this mysterious document, she looked at her sister, who, in return, gazed upon her.

"Well, Kathleen, after all," said Hanna, "it's not worth while losing one's temper about it. Never think of it again; only to punish him, I'd advise you, the next time you see Peety, to send it back."

"You don't suppose, Hanna, that I intended to keep it; but indeed," she added, with a smile; "it is *not* worth while bein' angry about."

As the sisters stood beside each other, holding this short conversation, it would be difficult to find any two females more strikingly dissimilar both in figure, features, and complexion. Hanna was plain, but not disagreeable, especially when her face became animated with good humor. Her complexion, though not at all of a sickly hue, was of that middle tint which is neither pale nor sallow, but holds an equivocal position between both. Her hair was black, but dull, and without that peculiar gloss which accompanies either the very snowy skin of a fair beauty, or, at least, the rich brown hue of a brunette. Her figure was in no way remarkable, and she was rather under the middle size.

Her sister, however, was a girl who deserves at our hands a more accurate and lengthened description. Kathleen Cavanagh was considerably *above* the middle size, her figure, in fact, being of the tallest; but no earthly form could surpass it in symmetry, and that voluptuous fulness of outline, which, when associated with a modest and youthful style of beauty, is, of all others, the most fascinating and irresistible. The whiteness of her unrivalled skin, and the gloss of health which shone from it were almost dazzling. Her full bust, which literally glowed with light and warmth, was moulded with inimitable proportion, and the masses of rich brown hair that shaded her white and expansive forehead, added incredible attractions to a face that was remarkable not only for simple beauty in its finest sense, but that divine charm of ever-varying expression which draws its lights and shadows, and the thousand graces with which it is accompanied, directly from the heart. Her dark eyes were large and flashing, and reflected by the vivacity or melancholy which increased or over-shadowed their lustre, all those joys or sorrows, and various shades of feeling by which she was moved, whilst her mouth gave indication of extraordinary and entrancing sweetness, especially when she smiled.

Such was Kathleen Cavanagh, the qualities of whose mind were still superior to the advantages of her person. And yet she shone not forth at the first view, nor immediately dazzled the beholder by the brilliancy of her charms. She was unquestionably a tall, fine-looking country girl, tastefully and appropriately dressed; but it was necessary to see her more than once, and to have an opportunity of examining her, time after time, to be able fully to appreciate the surprising character of her beauty, and the incredible variety of those changes which sustain its power and give it perpetual novelty to the heart and eye. It was, in fact, of that dangerous description which improves on inspection, and gradually develops itself upon the beholder, until he feels the full extent of its influence, and is sensible, perhaps, when too late, that he is its helpless and unresisting victim.

Around the two thorn-trees we have alluded to were built circular seats of the grassy turf, on which the two sisters, each engaged in knitting, now sat chatting and laughing with that unrestrained good humor and familiarity which gave unquestionable proof of the mutual confidence and affection that subsisted between them. Their natural tempers and dispositions were as dissimilar as their persons. Hanna was lively and mirthful, somewhat hasty, but placable, quick in her feelings of either joy or sorrow, and apparently not susceptible of deep or permanent impressions; whilst Kathleen, on the other hand, was serious, quiet, and placid—difficult to be provoked, of great sweetness of temper, with a tinge of melancholy that occasionally gave an irresistible charm to her voice and features, when conversing upon any subject that was calculated to touch the heart, or in which she felt deeply. Unlike her sister, she was resolute, firm, and almost immutable in her resolutions; but that was because her resolutions were seldom hasty or unadvised, but the result of a strong feeling of rectitude and great good sense. It is true she possessed high feelings of self-respect, together with an enthusiastic love for her religion, and a most earnest zeal for its advancement; indeed, so strongly did these predominate in her mind, that any act involving a personal slight towards herself, or indifference to her creed and its propagation, were looked upon by Kathleen as crimes for which there was no forgiveness. If she had any failings, it was in these two points they lay. But, at the same time, we are bound to say, that if the courage and enthusiasm of Joan of Arc

had been demanded of her by the state and condition of her country and her creed, she would have unquestionably sacrificed her life, if the sacrifice secured the prosperity of either.

Something of their difference of temperament might have been observed during their conversation, while sitting under the white thorn. Every now and then, for instance, Hanna would start up and commence a series of little flirtations with the blackbird, which she called her sweetheart, and again resume her chat and seat as before; or she would attempt to catch a butterfly as it fluttered about her, or sometimes give it pursuit over half the green, whilst Kathleen sat with laughing and delighted eyes, and a smile of unutterable sweetness on her lips, watching the success of this innocent frolic. In this situation we must now leave them, to follow Peety, who is on his way to deliver the other letter to Bryan M'Mahon.

Our little black Mercury was not long in arriving at the house of Tom M'Mahon, which he reached in company with that worthy man himself, whom he happened to overtake near Carriglass where he lived. M'Mahon seemed fatigued and travel-worn, and consequently was proceeding at a slow pace when Peety overtook him. The latter observed this.

"Why, thin, Tom," said he, after the first salutations had passed, "you look like a man that had jist put a tough journey over him."

"An' so I ought, Peety," he replied, "for I *have* put a tough journey over me."

"Musha where were you, thin, if it's fair to ax?" inquired Peety; "for as for me that hears everything almost, the never a word I heard o' this."

"I was in Dublin, thin, all the way," replied the farmer, "strivin' to get a renewal o' my laise from ould Squire Chevydale, the landlord; an' upon my snuggins, Peety, you may call a journey to Dublin an' home agin a tough one—devil a doubt of it. However, thank God, here we are at home; an' blessed be His name that we have a home to come to; for, afther all, what place is like it? Throth, Peety, my heart longed for these brave fields of ours—for the lough there below, and the wild hills above us; for it wasn't until I was away from them that I felt how strong the love of them was in my heart."

M'Mahon was an old but hale man, with a figure and aspect that were much above the common order even of the better class of peasants. There could be no mistaking the decent and composed spirit of integrity which was evident in his very manner; and there was something in his long flowing locks, now tinged with gray, as they rested upon his shoulders, that gave an air of singular respect to his whole appearance.

On uttering the last words he stood, and looking around him became so much affected that his eyes filled with tears. "Ay," said he, "thank God that we have our place to come to, an' that we will still have it to come to, and blessed be His name for all things! Come, Peety," he added, after a pause, "let us see how they all are inside; I'm longin' to see them, especially poor, dear Dora; an'—God bless me! here she is!—no, she ran back to tell them—but ay—oh, ay! here she is again, my darlin' girl, comin' to meet me."

He had scarcely uttered the words when an interesting, slender girl, about eighteen, blushing, and laughing, and crying, all at once, came flying towards him, and throwing her white arms about his neck, fell upon his bosom, kissed him, and wept with delight at his return.

"An' so, father dear, you're back to us! My gracious, we thought you'd never come home! Sure you worn't sick? We thought maybe that you took ill, or that—that—*something* happened you; and we wanted to send Bryan after you—but nothing happened you?—nor you worn't sick?"

"You affectionate, foolish darlin', no, I wasn't sick; nor nothing ill happened me, Dora."

"Oh, thank God! Look at them," she proceeded, directing his attention to the house, "look at them all crowdin' to the door—and here's Shibby, too, and Bryan himself—an' see my mother ready to lep out of herself wid pure joy—the Lord be praised that you're safe back!"

At this moment his second daughter ran to him, and a repetition of welcome similar to that which he received from Dora took place. His son Bryan grasped his hand, and said, whilst a tear stood even in his eye, that he was glad to see him safe home. The old man, in return, grasped his hand with an expression of deep feeling, and after having inquired if they had been all well in his absence, he proceeded with them to the house. Here the scene was still more interesting. Mrs. M'Mahon stood smiling at the door, but as he came near, she was obliged once or twice to wipe away the tears with the corner of her handkerchief. We have often observed how much fervid piety is mingled with the affections of the Irish people when in a state of excitement; and this meeting between the old man and his wife presented an additional proof of it.

"Blessed be God!" exclaimed his wife,

tenderly embracing him, "blessed be God, Tom darlin', that you're safe back to us! An' how are you, avourneen? an' wor you well ever since? an' there was nothin'—musha, go out o' this, Ranger, you thief—och, God forgive me! what am I sayin'? sure the poor dog is as glad as the best of us—arrah, thin, look at the affectionate crathur, a'most beside himself! Dora, *avillish*, give him the could stirabout that's in the skillet, jist for his affection, the crathur. Here, Ranger—Ranger, I say—oh no, sorra one's in the house now but yourself, Tom. Well, an' there was nothing wrong wid you?"

"Nothin', Nancy, thanks be to the Almighty—down, poor fellow—there now, Ranger—och, behave, you foolish dog—musha, see this!"

"Throth, Tom," continued his loving wife, "let what will happen, it's the last journey ever we'll let you take from us. Ever an' ever, there we wor thinkin' an' thinkin' a thousand things about you. At one time that something happened you; then that you fell sick an' had none but strangers about you. Throth we won't; let what will happen, you must stay wid us."

"Indeed an' I never *knewn* how I loved the place, an' you all, till I went; but, thank God, I hope it's the last journey ever I'll have to take from either you or it."

"Shibby, run down to—or do you, Dora, go, you're the souplest—to Paddy Mullen's and Jemmy Kelly's, and the rest of the neighbors, an' tell them to come up, that your father's home. Run now, acushla, an' if you fall don't wait to rise; an' Shibby, darlin', do you whang down a lot o' that bacon into rashers, your father must be at death's door wid hunger; but wasn't it well that I thought of having the whiskey in, for you see afther Thursday last we didn't know what minute you'd dhrop in on us, Tom, an' I said it was best to be prepared. Give Peety a chair, the crature; come forrid, Peety, an' take a sate; an' how are you? an' how is the girsha wid you, an' where is she?"

To these questions, thus rapidly put, Peety returned suitable answers; but indeed Mrs. M'Mahon did not wait to listen to them, having gone to another room to produce the whisky she had provided for the occasion.

"Here," she said, reappearing with a huge bottle in one hand and a glass in the other, "a sip o' the right sort will help you afther your long journey; you must be tired, be coorse, so take this."

"Aisy, Bridget," exclaimed her husband, "don't fill it; you'll make me *hearty*." *

"Throth an' I will fill it," she replied, "ay, an' put a heap on it. There now, finish that bumper."

The old man, with a smiling and happy face, received the glass, and taking his wife's hand in his, looked at her, and then upon them all, with an expression of deep emotion. "Bridget, your health; childre', all your healths; and here's to Carriglass, an' may we long live happy in it, as we will, plase God! Peety, not forgettin' you!"

We need hardly say that the glass went round, nor that Peety was not omitted in the hospitality any more than in the toast.

"Here, Bryan," said Mrs. M'Mahon, "lay that bottle on the dresser, it's not worth while puttin' it past till the neighbors comes up; an' it's they that'll be the glad neighbors to see you safe back agin, Tom."

In this she spoke truth. Honest and hearty was the welcome he received from them, as with sparkling eyes and a warm grasp they greeted him on his return. Not only had Paddy Mullin and Jemmy Kelly run up in haste—the latter, who had been digging in his garden, without waiting to put on his hat or coat—but other families in the neighborhood, young and old, crowded in to welcome him home—*from Dublin*—for in that lay the principal charm. The bottle was again produced, and a holiday spirit now prevailed among them. Questions upon questions were put to him with reference to the wonders they had heard of the great metropolis—of the murders and robberies committed upon travellers—the kidnapping of strangers from the country—the Lord Lieutenant's Castle, with three hundred and sixty-four windows in it, and all the extraordinary sights and prodigies which it is supposed to contain. In a few minutes after this friendly accession to their numbers had taken place, a youth entered about nineteen years of age—handsome, tall, and well-made—in fact, such a stripling as gave undeniable promise of becoming a fine, powerful young man. On being handed a glass of whiskey he shook hands with M'Mahon, welcomed him home, and then drank all their healths by name until he came to that of Dora, when he paused, and, coloring, merely nodded towards her. We cannot undertake to account for this omission, nor do more than record what actually happened. Neither do we know why Dora blushed so deeply as she did, nor why the sparkling and rapid glance which she gave him in return occasioned him to look down with an appearance of confusion and pain. That some understanding subsisted between young Cavanagh—for he was Gerald's son—and Dora might have been evident to a close observer; but in truth

* Hearty—tipsy.

there was at that moment no such thing as a close observer among them, every eye being fixed with impatience and curiosity upon Tom M'Mahon, who had now most of the conversation to himself, little else being left to the share of his auditors than the interjectional phrases and exclamations of wonder at his extraordinary account of Dublin.

"But, father," said Bryan, "about the business that brought you there? Did you get the Renewal?"

"I got as good," replied the simple-hearted old man, "an' that was *the word of a gintleman*—an' sure they say that *that's* the best security in the world."

"Well, but how was it?" they exclaimed, "an' how did it happen that you didn't get the Lease itself?"

"Why, you see," he proceeded in reply, "the poor gintleman was near his end—an' it was owin' to Pat Corrigan that I seen him at all—for Pat, you know, is his own man. When I went in to where he sat I found Mr. Fethertonge the agent wid him: he had a night-cap on, an' was sittin' in a big arm-chair, wid one of his feet an' a leg swaythed wid flannel. I thought he was goin' to write or sign papers. 'Well, M'Mahon, says he—for he was always as keen as a briar, an' knew me at once—'what do you want? an' what has brought you from the country?' I then spoke to him about the new lease; an' he said to Fethertonge, 'prepare M'Mahon's lease, Fethertonge;—you shall have a new lease, M'Mahon. You are an honest man, and your family have been so for many a long year upon our property. As my health is unsartin,' he said, turning to Mr. Fethertonge, 'I take Mr. Fethertonge here to witness, that in case anything should happen me I give you my promise for a renewal—an' not only in my name alone, but in my son's; an' I now lave it upon him to fulfil my intentions an' my words, if I should not live to see it done myself. Mr. Fethertonge here has brought me papers to sign, but I am not able to hould a pen, or if I was I'd give you a written promise; but you have my solemn word, I fear my dyin' word, in Mr. Fethertonge's presence—that you shall have a lease of your farm at the ould rint. It is such tenants as you we want, M'Mahon, an' that we ought to encourage on our property. Fethertonge, do you in the mane time see that a lease is prepared for M'Mahon; an' see, at all events, that my wishes shall be carried into effect.' Sich was his last words to me, but he was a corpse on the next day but one afterwards."

"It's jist as good," they exclaimed with one voice; "for what is betther, or what can be betther than *the word of an Irish gentleman?*"

"What *ought* to be betther, at all events?" said Bryan. "Well, father, so far everything is right, for there is no doubt but his son will fulfil his words—Mr. Fethertonge himself isn't the thing; but I don't see why he should be our enemy. We always stood well with the ould man, an' I hope will with the son. Come, mother, move the bottle again—there's another round in it still; an' as everything looks so well and our mind is aisy, we'll see it to the bottom."

The conversation was again resumed, questions were once more asked concerning the sights and sounds of Dublin, of which one would imagine they could scarcely ever hear enough, until the evening was tolerably far advanced, when the neighbors withdrew to their respective homes, and left M'Mahon and his family altogether to themselves.

Peety, now that the joy and gratulation for the return of their father had somewhat subsided, lost no time in delivering Hycy Burke's communication into the hands of Bryan. The latter, on opening it, started with surprise not inferior to that with which Kathleen Cavanagh had perused the missive addressed to her. Nor was this all. The letter received by Bryan, as if the matter had been actually designed by the writer, produced the self-same symptoms of deep resentment upon him that the mild and gentle Kathleen Cavanagh experienced on the perusal of her own. His face became flushed and his eye blazed with indignation as he went through its contents; after which he once more looked at the superscription, and notwithstanding the vehement passion into which it had thrown him, he was ultimately obliged to laugh.

"Peety," said he, resuming his gravity, "you carried a letter from Hycy Burke to Kathleen Cavanagh to-day?"

"Who says that?" replied Peety, who could not but remember the solemnity of his promise to that accomplished gentleman.

"I do, Peety."

"Well, I can't help you, Bryan, nor prevent you from thinking so, sure—stick to that."

"Why, I know you did, Peety."

"Well, acushla, an' if you do, your only so much the wiser."

"Oh, I understand," continued Bryan, "it's a private affair, or intended to be so—an' Mr. Hycy has made you promise not to spake of it."

"Sure you know all about it, Bryan; an' isn't that enough for you? Only what answer am I to give him?"

"None at present, Peety; but say I'll see himself in a day or two."

"That's your answer, then?"

"That's all the answer I can give till I see himself, as I said."

"Well, good-bye, Bryan, an' God be wid you!"

"Good-bye, Peety!" and thus they parted.

CHAPTER III.

Hycy and a Confidant—Jemmy Burke Refuses to be Made a Fool of.

Hycy Burke was one of those persons who, under the appearance of a somewhat ardent temperament, are capable of abiding the issue of an event with more than ordinary patience. Having not the slightest suspicion of the circumstance which occasioned Bryan M'Mahon's resentment, he waited for a day of two under the expectation that his friend was providing the sum necessary to accommodate him. The third and fourth days passed, however, without his having received any reply whatsoever; and Hycy, who had set his heart upon Crazy Jane, on finding that his father—who possessed as much firmness as he did of generosity—absolutely refused to pay for her, resolved to lose no more time in putting Bryan's friendship to the test. To this, indeed, he was urged by Burton, a wealthy but knavish country horse-dealer, as we said, who wrote to him that unless he paid for her within a given period, he must be under the necessity of closing with a person who had offered him a higher price. This message was very offensive to Hycy, whose great foible, as the reader knows, was to be considered a gentleman, not merely in appearance, but in means and circumstances. He consequently had come to the determination of writing again to M'Mahon upon the same subject, when chance brought them together in the market of Ballymacan.

After the usual preliminary inquiries as to health, Hycy opened the matter:—

"I asked you to lend me five-and-thirty pounds to secure Crazy Jane," said he, "and you didn't even answer my letter. I admit I'm pretty deeply in your debt, as it is, my dear Bryan, but you know I'm safe."

"I'm not at this moment thinking much of money matters, Hycy; but, as you like plain speaking, I tell you candidly that I'll lend you no money."

Hycy's manner changed all at once; he looked at M'Mahon for nearly a minute, and said in quite a different tone—

"What is the cause of this coldness, Bryan? Have I offended you?"

"Not knowingly—but you *have* offended me; an' that's all I'll say about it."

"I'm not aware of it," replied the other—"my word and honor I'm not."

Bryan felt himself in a position of peculiar difficulty; he could not openly quarrel with Hycy, unless he made up his mind to disclose the grounds of the dispute, which, as matters then stood between him and Kathleen Cavanagh, to whom he had not actually declared his affection, would have been an act of great presumption on his part.

"Good-bye, Hycy," said he; "I have told you my mind, and now I've done with it."

"With all my heart!" said the other—"that's a matter of taste on your part. You're offended, you say; yet you choose to put the offence in your pocket. It's all right, I suppose—but you know best. Good-bye to you, at all events," he added; "be a good boy and take care of yourself."

M'Mahon nodded with good-humored contempt in return, but spoke not.

"By all that deserves an oath," exclaimed Hycy, looking bitterly after him, "if I should live to the day of judgment I'll never forgive you your insulting conduct this day—and *that* I'll soon make you feel to your cost!"

This misunderstanding between the two friends caused Hycy to feel much mortification and disappointment. After leaving M'Mahon, he went through the market evidently with some particular purpose in view, if one could judge from his manner. He first proceeded to the turf-market, and looked with searching eye among those who stood waiting to dispose of their loads. From this locality he turned his steps successively to other parts of the town, still looking keenly about him as he went along. At length he seemed disappointed or indifferent, it was difficult to say which, and stood coiling the lash of his whip in the dust, sometimes quite unconsciously, and sometimes as if a wager depended on the success with which he did it—when, on looking down the street, he observed a little broad, squat man, with a fiery red head, a face almost scaly with freckles, wide projecting cheek-bones, and a nose so thoroughly of the saddle species, that a rule laid across the base of it, immediately between the eyes, would lie close to the whole front of his face. In addition to these personal accomplishments, he had a pair of strong bow legs, terminating in two broad, flat feet, in complete keeping with his whole figure, which, though not remarkable for symmetry, was nevertheless indicative of great and extraordinary strength. He wore neither stockings nor cravat of any kind, but had a pair of strong clouted brogues upon his feet; thus disclosing to the spectator two legs and a breast that were covered over with a *fell* of red close hair that might have

been long and strong enough for a badger. He carried in his hand a short whip, resembling a carrot in shape, and evidently of such a description as no man that had any regard for his health would wish to come in contact with, especially from the hand of such a double-jointed but mis-shapen Hercules as bore it.

"Ted, how goes it, my man?"

"*Ghe dhe shin dirthu, a dinaousal?*" replied Ted, surveying him with a stare.

"D—n you!" was about to proceed from Hycy's lips when he perceived that a very active magistrate, named Jennings, stood within hearing. The latter passed on, however, and Hycy proceeded:—"I was about to abuse you, Ted, for coming out with your Irish to *me*," he said, "until I saw Jennings, and then I *had* you."

"Throgs, din, Meeisther Hycy, I don't like the *Bairlha**—'caise I can't sphake her properly, at all, at all. Come *you* 'out wid the Gailick fwhor me, i' you plaise, Meeisther Hycy."

"D—n your Gaelic!" replied Hycy—"no, I won't—I don't speak it."

"The Laud forget you for that!" replied Ted, with a grin; "my ould grandmudher might larn it frwhom you—hach, ach, ha!"

"None of your d—d impertinence, Ted. I want to speak to you."

"Fwhat would her be?" asked Ted, with a face in which there might be read such a compound of cunning, vacuity, and ferocity as could rarely be witnessed in the same countenance.

"Can you come down to me to-night?"

"No; I'll be busy."

"Where are you at work now?"

"In Glendearg, above."

"Well, then, if you can't come to me, I must only go to you. Will you be there to-night? I wish to speak to you on very particular business."

"Shiss; you *will*, dhin, wanst more?" asked the other, significantly.

"I think so."

"Shiss—ay—vary good. Fwen will she come?"

"About eleven or twelve; so don't be from about the place anywhere."

"Shiss—dhin—vary good. Is dhat all?"

"That's all now. Are your turf *dry* or *wet*† to-day?"

"Not *vary dhry*," replied Ted, with a grin so wide that, as was humorously said by a neighbor of his, "it would take a telescope to enable a man to see from the one end of it to the other."

Hycy nodded and laughed, and Ted, cracking his whip, proceeded up the town to sell his turf.

Hycy now sauntered about through the market, chatting here and there among acquaintances, with the air of a man to whom neither life nor anything connected with it could occasion any earthly trouble. Indeed, it mattered little what he felt, his easiness of manner was such that not one of his acquaintances could for a moment impute to him the possibility of ever being weighed down by trouble or care of any kind; and lest his natural elasticity of spirits might fail to sustain this perpetual buoyancy, he by no means neglected to fortify himself with artificial support. Meet him when or where you might, be it at six in the morning or twelve at night, you were certain to catch from his breath the smell of liquor, either in its naked simplicity or disguised and modified in some shape.

His ride home, though a rapid, was by no means a pleasing one. M'Mahon had not only refused to lend him the money he stood in need of, but actually quarrelled with him, as far as he could judge, for no other purpose but that he might make the quarrel a plea for refusing him. This disappointment, to a person of Hycy's disposition, was, we have seen, bitterly vexatious, and it may be presumed that he reached home in anything but an agreeable humor. Having dismounted, he was about to enter the hall-door, when his attention was directed towards that of the kitchen by a rather loud hammering, and on turning his eyes to the spot he found two or three tinkers very busily engaged in soldering, clasping, and otherwise repairing certain vessels belonging to that warm and spacious establishment. The leader of these vagrants was a man named Philip Hogan, a fellow of surprising strength and desperate character, whose feats of hardihood and daring had given him a fearful notoriety over a large district of the country. Hogan was a man whom almost every one feared, being, from confidence, we presume, in his great strength, as well as by nature, both insolent, overbearing, and ruffianly in the extreme. His inseparable and appropriate companion was a fierce and powerful bull-dog of the old Irish breed, which he had so admirably trained that it was only necessary to give him a sign, and he would seize by the throat either man or beast, merely in compliance with the will of his master. On this occa-

* English tongue.

† One method of spelling Poteen is by bringing in *kishes* of turf to the neighboring markets, when those who are *up to the secret* purchase the turf, or pretend to do so; and while in the act of discharging the load, the Keg of Poteen is quickly passed into the house of him who purchases the turf.—Are your turf *wet* or *dry?* was, consequently, a *pass-word.*

sion he was accompanied by two of his brothers, who were, in fact, nearly as impudent and offensive ruffians as himself. Hycy paused for a moment, seemed thoughtful, and tapped his boot with the point of his whip as he looked at them. On entering the parlor he found dinner over, and his father, as was usual, waiting to get his tumbler of punch.

"Where's my mother?" he asked—"where's Mrs. Burke?"

On uttering the last words he raised his voice so as she might distinctly hear him.

"She's above stairs gettin' the whiskey," replied his father, "and God knows she's long enough about it."

Hycy ran up, and meeting her on the lobby, said, in a low, anxious voice—

"Well, what news? Will he stand it?"

"No," she replied, "you may give up the notion—he won't do it, an' there's no use in axin' him any more."

"He won't do it!" repeated the son; "are you certain now?"

"Sure an' sartin. I done all that could be done; but it's worse an' worse he got."

Something escaped Hycy in the shape of an ejaculation, of which we are not in possession at present; he immediately added:—

"Well, never mind. Heavens! how I pity you, ma'am—to be united to such a d—d—hem!—to such a—a—such a—gentleman!"

Mrs. Burke raised her hands as if to intimate that it was useless to indulge in any compassion of the kind.

"The thing's now past cure," she said; "I'm a marthyr, an' that's all that's about it. Come down till I get you your dinner."

Hycy took his seat in the parlor, and began to give a stave of the "Bay of Biscay:"—

"'Loud roar'd the dreadful thunder,
The rain a deluge pours;
The clouds were rent asunder
By light'ning's vivid—'

By the way, mother, what are those robbing ruffians, the Hogans, doing at the kitchen door there?"

"Troth, whatever they like," she replied. "I tould that vagabond, Philip, that I had nothing for them to do, an' says he, 'I'm the best judge of that, Rosha Burke.' An, with that he walks into the kitchen, an' takes everything that he seen a flaw in, an' there he and them sat a mendin' an' sotherin' an' hammerin' away at them, without ever sayin' 'by your lave.'"

"It's perfectly well known that they're robbers," said Hycy, "and the general opinion is that they're in connection with a Dublin gang, who are in this part of the country at present. However, I'll speak to the ruffians about such conduct."

He then left the parlor, and proceeding to the farmyard, made a signal to one of the Hogans, who went down hammer in hand to where he stood. During a period of ten minutes, he and Hycy remained in conversation, but of what character it was, whether friendly or otherwise, the distance at which they stood rendered it impossible for any one to ascertain. Hycy then returned to dinner, whilst his father in the meantime sat smoking his pipe, and sipping from time to time at his tumbler of punch. Mrs. Burke, herself, occupied an arm-chair to the left of the fire, engaged at a stocking which was one of a pair that she contrived to knit for her husband during every twelve months; and on the score of which she pleaded strong claims to a character of most exemplary and indefatigable industry.

"Any news from the market, Hycy?" said his father.

"Yes," replied Hycy, in that dry ironical tone which he always used to his parents—"rather interesting—Ballymacan is in the old place."

"Bekaise," replied his father, with more quickness than might be expected, as he whiffed away the smoke with a face of very sarcastic humor; "I hard it had gone up a bit towards the mountains—but I knew you wor the boy could tell me whether it had or not—ha!—ha!—ha!"

This rejoinder, in addition to the intelligence Hycy had just received from his mother, was not calculated to improve his temper. "You may laugh," he replied; "but if your respectable father had treated you in a spirit so stingy and beggarly as that which I experience at your hands, I don't know how you might have borne it."

"*My* father!" replied Burke; "take your time, Hycy—my hand to you, he had a different son to manage from what I have."

"God sees that's truth," exclaimed his wife, turning the expression to her son's account.

"I was no gentleman, Hycy," Burke proceeded.

"Ah, is it possible?" said the son, with a sneer. "Are you sure of that, now?"

"Nor no spendthrift, Hycy."

"No," said the wife, "you never had the spirit; you were ever and always *a molshy*."*

"An' yet *molshy* as I was," he replied, "you wor glad to catch me. But Hycy, my good boy, I didn't cost my father at the rate of from a hundre'-an'-fifty to two-hundre'-a-year, an' get myself laughed at and snubbed

* A womanly, contemptible fellow.

by my superiors, for forcin' myself into their company."

"Can't you let the boy ait his dinner in peace, at any rate?" said his mother. "Upon my credit I wouldn't be surprised if you drove him away from us altogether."

"I only want to drive him into common sense, and the respectful feeling he ought to show to both you an' me, Rosha," said Burke; "if he expects to have either luck or grace, or the blessing of God upon him, he'll change his coorses, an' not keep breakin' *my* heart as he's doin'."

"Will you pay for the mare I bought, father?" asked Hycy, very seriously. "I have already told you, that I paid three guineas *earnest;* I hope you will regard your name and family so far as to prevent me from breaking my word — besides leading the world to suppose that you are a poor man."

"Regard my name and family!" returned the father, with a look of bitterness and sorrow; "who is bringin' them into disgrace, Hycy?"

"In the meantime," replied the son, "I have asked a plain question, Mr. Burke, and I expect a plain answer; will you pay for the mare?"

"An' supposin' I don't?"

"Why, then, Mr. Burke, if you don't you won't, that's all."

"I must stop some time," replied his father, "an' that is now. *I won't pay for her.*"

"Well then, sir, I shall feel obliged, as your respectable wife has just said, if you will allow me to eat, and if possible, live in peace."

"I'm speakin' only for your--"

"That will do now—hush—silence if you please."

"Hycy dear," said the mother; "why would you ax him another question about it? Drop the thing altogether."

"I will, mother, but I pity *you;* in the meantime, I thank you, ma'am, of your advice."

"Hycy," she continued, with a view of changing the conversation; "did you hear that Tom M'Bride's dead?"

"No ma'am, but I expected it; when did he die?"

Before his father could reply, a fumbling was heard at the hall-door; and, the next moment, Hogan, thrust in his huge head and shoulders began to examine the lock by attempting to turn the key in it.

"Hogan, what are you about?" asked Hycy.

"I beg your pardon," replied the ruffian; "I only wished to know if the lock wanted mendin'—that was all, Masther Hycy."

"Begone, sirra," said the other; "how dare you have the presumption to take such a liberty? you impudent scoundrel! Mother, you had better pay them," he added; "give the vagabonds anything they ask, to get rid of them."

Having dined, her worthy son mixed a tumbler of punch, and while drinking it, he amused himself, as was his custom, by singing snatches of various songs, and drumming with his fingers upon the table; whilst every now and then he could hear the tones of his mother's voice in high altercation with Hogan and his brothers. This, however, after a time, ceased, and she returned to the parlor a good deal chafed by the dispute.

"There's one thing I wonder at," she observed, "that of all men in the neighborhood, Gerald Cavanagh would allow sich vagabonds as they an' Kate Hogan is, to put in his kiln. Troth, Hycy," she added, speaking to him in a warning and significant tone of voice, "if there wasn't something low an' mane in him, he wouldn't do it."

"'Tis when the cup is smiling before us.
And we pledge unto our hearts—'

Your health, mother. Mr. Burke, here's to you! Why I dare say you are right, Mrs. Burke. The Cavanagh family is but an upstart one at best; it wants antiquity, ma'am —a mere affair of yesterday, so what after all could you expect from it?"

Honest Jemmy looked at him and then groaned. "An upstart family!—that'll do —oh, murdher—well, 'tis respectable at all events; however, as to havin' the Hogans about them—they wor always about them; it was the same in their father's time. I remember ould Laghlin Hogan, an' his whole clanjamfrey, men an' women, young an' old, wor near six months out o' the year about ould Gerald Cavanagh's—the present man's father; and another thing you may build upon —that whoever 'ud chance to speak a hard word against one o' the Cavanagh family, before Philip Hogan or any of his brothers, would stand a strong chance of a shirtful o' sore bones. Besides, we all know how Philip's father saved Mrs. Cavanagh's life about nine or ten months after her marriage. At any rate, whatever bad qualities the vagabonds have, want of gratitude isn't among them."

"'————That are true, boys, true,
The sky of this life opens o'er us,
And heaven—'

M'Bride, ma'am, will be a severe loss to his family."

"Throth he will, and a sarious loss—for

among ourselves, there was none o' them like him."

"'Gives a glance of its blue—'

I think I ought to go to the wake to-night. I know it's a bit of a descent on my part, but still it is scarcely more than is due to a decent neighbor. Yes, I shall go; 'it is determined on."

"'I ga'ed a waefu' gate yestreen,
A gate I fear I'll dearly rue;
I gat my death frae twa sweet een,
Twa lovely een o' bonnie blue.'

Mine are brown, Mrs. Burke—the eyes you wot of; but alas! the family is an upstart one, and that is strongly against the Protestant interest in the case. Heigho!"

Jemmy Burke, having finished his after-dinner pipe and his daily tumbler both together, went out to his men; and Hycy, with whom he had left the drinking materials, after having taken a tumbler or two, put on a strong pair of boots, and changed the rest of his dress for a coarser suit, bade his mother a polite good-bye, and informed her, that as he intended to be present at M'Bride's wake he would most probably not return until near morning.

CHAPTER IV.

A Poteen Still-House at Midnight—Its Inmates.

About three miles in a south-western direction from Burke's residence, the country was bounded by a range of high hills and mountains of a very rugged and wild, but picturesque description. Although a portion of the same landscape, yet nothing could be more strikingly distinct in character than the position of the brown wild hills, as contrasted with that of the mountains from which they abutted. The latter ran in long and lofty ranges that were marked by a majestic and sublime simplicity, whilst the hills were of all shapes and sizes, and seemed as if cast about at random. As a matter of course the glens and valleys that divided them ran in every possible direction, sometimes crossing and intersecting each other at right angles, and sometimes running parallel, or twisting away in opposite directions. In one of those glens that lay nearest the mountains, or rather indeed among them, was a spot which from its peculiar position would appear to have been designed from the very beginning as a perfect paradise for the illicit distiller. It was a kind of back chamber in the mountains, that might, in fact, have escaped observation altogether, as it often did. The approach to it was by a long precipitous glen, that could be entered only at its lower end, and seemed to terminate against the abrupt side of the mountain, like a *cul de sac*. At the very extremity, however, of this termination, and a little on the right-hand side, there was a steep, narrow pass leading into a recess which was completely encompassed by precipices. From this there was only one means of escape independently of the gut through which it was entered. The moors on the side most approachable were level, and on a line to the eye with that portion of the mountains which bounded it on the opposite side, so that as one looked forward the space appeared to be perfectly continuous, and consequently no person could suspect that there lay so deep and precipitous a glen between them.

In the northern corner of this remarkable locality, a deep cave, having every necessary property as a place for private distillation, ran under the rocks, which met over it in a kind of gothic arch. A stream of water just sufficient for the requisite purposes, fell in through a fissure from above, forming such a little subterraneous cascade in the cavern as human design itself could scarcely have surpassed in felicity of adaptation to the objects of an illicit distiller.

To this cave, then, we must take the liberty of transporting our readers, in order to give them an opportunity of getting a peep at the inside of a Poteen Still-house, and of hearing a portion of conversation, which, although not remarkable for either elegance or edification, we are, nevertheless, obliged to detail, as being in some degree necessary to the elucidation of our narrative. Up in that end which constituted the termination of the cave, and fixed upon a large turf fire which burned within a circle of stones that supported it, was a tolerably-sized Still, made of block-tin. The mouth of this Still was closed by an air-tight cover, also of tin, called the Head, from which a tube of the same metal projected into a large keeve, or condenser, that was kept always filled with cool water by an incessant stream from the cascade we have described, which always ran into and overflowed it. The arm of this head was fitted and made air-tight, also, into a spiral tube of copper, called the Worm, which rested in the water of the cooler; and as it consisted of several convolutions, like a cork-screw, its office was to condense the hot vapor which was transmitted to it from the glowing Still into that description of spirits known as poteen. At the bottom of this cooler, the Worm terminated in a small

cock or spigot, from which the spirits projected in a slender stream, about the thickness of a quill, into a vessel placed for its reception. Such was the position of the Still, Head, and Worm, when in full operation. Fixed about the cave, upon rude stone stillions, were the usual vessels requisite for the various processes through which it was necessary to put the malt, before the wort, which is its first liquid shape, was fermented, cleared off, and thrown into the Still to be singled; for our readers must know that distillation is a double process, the *first* product being called *singlings*, and the *second* or last, *doublings*—which is the perfect liquor. Sacks of malt, empty vessels, piles of turf, heaps of grains, tubs of wash, and kegs of whiskey, were lying about in all directions, together with pots, pans, wooden trenchers, and dishes, for culinary uses. The seats were round stones and black *bosses* which were made of a light hard moss found in the mountains and bogs, and frequently used as seats in rustic chimney corners. On entering, your nose was assailed by such a mingled stench of warm grains, sour barm, putrid potato skins, and strong whiskey, as required considerable fortitude to bear without very unequivocal tokens of disgust.

The persons assembled were in every way worthy of the place and its dependencies. Seated fronting the fire was our friend Teddy Phats, which was the only name he was ever known by, his wild, beetle brows lit into a red, frightful glare of savage mirth that seemed incapable, in its highest glee, to disengage itself entirely from an expression of the man's unquenchable ferocity. Opposite to him sat a tall, smut-faced, truculent-looking young fellow, with two piercing eyes and a pair of grim brows, which, when taken into conjunction with a hard, unfeeling mouth, from the corners of which two right lines ran down his chin, giving that part of his face a most dismal expression, constituted a countenance that matched exceedingly well with the visage of Teddy Phats. This worthy gentleman was a tinker, and one of Hogan's brothers, whom we have already introduced to our readers. Scattered about the fire and through the cavern were a party of countreymen who came to purchase whiskey for a wedding, and three or four publicans and shebeenmen who had come on professional business. Some were drinking, some indulging in song, and some were already lying drunk or asleep in different parts of this subterraneous pandemonium. Exalted in what was considered the position of honor sat a country hedge-schoolmaster, his mellow eye beaming with something between natural humor, a sense of his own importance, and the influence of pure whiskey, fresh, as it is called, from the Still-eye.

"Here, Teddy," said one of the countrymen, "will you fill the bottle again."

"No," replied Teddy, who, though as cunning as the devil himself, could seldom be got to speak anything better than broken English, and that of such a character that it was often scarcely intelligible.

"No," he replied; "I gav'd you wan bottle 'idout payment fwhor her, an' by shapers I won't give none oder."

"Why, you burning beauty, aren't we takin' ten gallons, an' will you begrudge us a second bottle?"

"Shiss—devil purshue de bottle more ye'll drunk here 'idout de *airigad*,* dat's fwhat you will."

"Teddy," said the schoolmaster, "I drink propination to you as a profissional gintleman! No man uses more indepindent language than you do. You are under no earthly obligation to Messrs. Syntax and Prosody. Grammar, my worthy friend, is banished as an intruder from your elocution, just as you would exclude a gauger from your Still-house."

"Fwhat about de gagur!" exclaimed Teddy, starting; "d—n him an' shun-tax an' every oder tax, rint an' all—hee! hee! hee!"

We may as well let our readers know, before we proceed farther, that in the opinion of many, Teddy Phats understood and could speak English as well as any man of his station in the country. In fairs or markets, or other public places, he spoke, it is true, nothing but Irish unless in a private way, and only to persons in whom he thought he could place every confidence. It was often observed, however, that in such conversations he occasionally arranged the matter of those who could use only English to him, in such a way as proved pretty clearly that he must have possessed a greater mastery over that language than he acknowledged. We believe the fact to be, however, that Teddy, as an illicit distiller, had found it, on some peculiar occasions connected with his profession, rather an inconvenient accomplishment to know English. He had given some evidence in his day, and proved, or attempted to prove, a few *alibies* on behalf of his friends; and he always found, as there is good reason to believe, that the Irish language, when properly enunciated through the medium of an interpreter, was rather the safer of the two, especially when resorted to within the precincts of the country court-house and in hearing of the judge.

"You're a fool, Teddy," said Hogan; "let

* Money.

them drink themselves blind—this liquor's paid for; an' if they lose or spill it by the way, why, blazes to your purty mug, don't you know they'll have to pay for another cargo."

Teddy immediately took the hint.

"Barney Brogan," he shouted to a lubberly-looking, bullet-headed cub, half knave, half fool, who lived about such establishments, and acted as messenger, spy, and vidette; "listen hedher! bring Darby Keenan dere dat bottle, an' let 'em drink till de grace o' God comes on 'em—ha, ha, ha!"

"More power to you, Vaynus," exclaimed Keenan; "you're worth a thousand pounds, quarry weight."

"I am inclined to think, Mr. Keenan," said the schoolmaster, "that you are in the habit occasionally of taking slight liberties wid the haythen mythology. Little, I'll be bound, the divine goddess of beauty ever dreamt she'd find a representative in Teddy Phats."

"Bravo! masther," replied Keenan, "you're the boy can do—only that English is too tall for me. At any rate," he added, approaching the worthy preceptor, "take a spell o' this—it's a language we can all understand."

"You mane to say, Darby," returned the other, "that it's a kind of universal spelling-book amongst us, and so it is—an alphabet aisily larned. Your health, now and under all circumstances! Teddy, or Thaddeus, I drink to your symmetry and inexplicable proportions; and I say for your comfort, my worthy distillator, that if you are not so refulgent in beauty as Venus, you are a purer haythen."

"Fwhat a bloody fwhine *Bairlha*-man the meeisther is," said Teddy, with a grin. "Fwhaicks, meeisthur, your de posey of Tullyticklem, spishilly wid Captain Fwhiskey at your back. You spake de Bairlha up den jist all as one as nobody could understand her—ha, ha, ha!"

The master, whose name was Finigan, or, as he wished to be called, O'Finigan, looked upon Teddy and shook his head very significantly.

"I'm afraid, my worthy distallator," he proceeded, "that the proverb which says '*latet anguis in herba*,' is not inapplicable in your case. I think I can occasionally detect in these ferret-like orbs that constitute such an attractive portion of your beauty, a passing scintillation of intelligence which you wish to keep *a secretis*, as they say."

"Mr. Finigan," said Keenan, who had now returned to his friends, "if you wouldn't be betther employed to-morrow, you'd be welcome to the weddin'."

"Many thanks, Mr. Keenan," replied Finigan; "I accept your hospitable offer wid genuine cordiality. To-morrow will be a day worthy of a white mark to all parties concerned. Horace calls it chalk, which is probably the most appropriate substance with which the records of matrimonial felicity could be registered, *crede experto*."

"At any rate, Misther Finigan, give the boys a holiday to-morrow, and be down wid us airly."

"There is not," replied Finigan, who was now pretty well advanced, "I believe widin the compass of written or spoken language—and I might on that subject appeal to Mr. Thaddeus O'Phats here, who is a good authority on that particular subject, or indeed on any one that involves the beauty of elocution—I say, then, there is not widin the compass of spoken language a single word composed of two syllables so delectable to human ears, as is that word '*dismiss*,' to the pupils of a *Plantation Seminary*;* and I assure you that those talismanic syllables shall my youthful pupils hear correctly pronounced to-morrow about ten o'clock."

Whilst O'Finigan was thus dealing out the king's English with such complacent volubility—a volubility that was deeply indebted to the liquor he had taken—the following dialogue took place in a cautious under-tone between Batt Hogan and Teddy.

"So Hycy the sportheen is to be up here to-night?"

"Shiss."

"B—t your shiss! can't you spake like a Christian?"

"No, I won't," replied the other, angrily; "I'll spake as I likes."

"What brings him up, do you know?"

"Bekaise he's goin' to thry his misfortune upon *her* here," he replied, pointing to the still. "*You'll* have a good job of her, fwhedher or no."

"Why, will he want a new one, do you think?"

"Shiss, to be sure—would ye tink I'd begin to *run*† for him on dis ould skillet? an' be de token moreover, dat wouldn't be afther puttin' nothin' in your pockets—hee! hee! hee!"

"Well, all that's right—don't work for him widout a new one complate, Teddy—Still, Head, and Worm."

"Shiss, I tell you to be sure I won't—he thried her afore, though."

"Nonsense!—no he didn't."

"Ah, ha! ay dhin—an' she milked well too—a good cow—a brave *cheehony* she was for him."

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* A modest periphrasis for a Hedge-School.

† A slang phrase for distilling.

"An' why did he give it up?"

"Fwhy—fwhy, afeard he'd be diskivered, to be sure; an' dhin shure he couldn't hunt wid de *dinnaousals*—wid de gentlemans."

"An' what if he's discovered now?"

"Fwhat?—fwhy so much the worsher for you an' me: he's ginerous now an' den, anyway; but a great rogue afther all, fwher so high a hid as he carries."

"If I don't mistake," proceeded Hogan, "either himself or his family, anyhow, will be talked of before this time to-morrow."

"Eh, Batt?" asked the other, who had changed his position and sat beside him during this dialogue—"how is dhat now?"

"I don't rightly know—I can't say," replied Hogan, with a smile murderously grim but knowing—"I'm not up; but the sportheen's a made boy, I think."

"*Dher cheerna!* you *are* up," said Teddy, giving him a furious glance as he spoke; "there must be no saycrits, I say."

"You're a blasted liar, I tell you—I am not, but I suspect—that's all."

"What brought you up dhis night?" asked Teddy, suspiciously.

"Becaúse I hard he was to come," replied his companion; "but whether or not I'd be here."

"*Tha sha maigh*—it's right—may be so—shiss, it's all right, may be so—well?"

Teddy, although he said it was all right, did not seem however to think so. The furtive and suspicious glance which he gave Hogan from under his red beetle brows should be seen in order to be understood.

"Well?" said Hogan, re-echoing him—"it *is* well; an' what is more, my Kate is to be up here wid a pair o' geese to roast for us, for we must make him comfortable. She wint to thry her hand upon somebody's roost, an' it'll go hard if she fails!"

"Fwhail!" exclaimed Teddy, with a grin—"ah, the dioual a fwhail!"

"An' another thing—he's comin' about Kathleen Cavanagh—Hycy is. He wants to gain our intherest about her!"

"Well, an' what harm?"

"Maybe there is, though: it's whispered that he—hut! doesn't he say himself that there isn't a girl of his own religion in the parish *he'd marry*—now I'd like to see them *married*, Teddy, but as for anything else—"

"Hee! hee! hee!—well," exclaimed Teddy, with a horrible grimace that gave his whole countenance a facequake, "an' maybe he's right. Maybe it 'udn't be aisy to get a *colleen* of *his* religion—I tink his religion is fwhere Phiddher Fwhite's estate is—beyant the beyands, where the mare foaled the fwhiddler—hee! hee! hee!"

"He had better thry none of his sckames wid any of the Cavanaghs," said Bat, "for fraid he might be brought to bed of a mistake some fine day—that's all I say; an' there's more eyes than mine upon him."

This dialogue was nearly lost in the loudness of a debate which had originated with Keenan and certain of his friends in the lower part of the still-house. Some misunderstanding relative to the families of the parties about to be united had arisen, and was rising rapidly into a comparative estimate of the prowess and strength of their respective factions, and consequently assuming a very belligerent aspect, when a tall, lank, but powerful female, made her appearance, carrying a large bundle in her hand.

"More power, Kate!" exclaimed Hogan. "I knew she would," he added, digging Teddy's ribs with his elbow.

"Aisy, man!" said his companion; "if you love me, say so, but don't hint it dat way."

"Show forth, Kate!" proceeded her husband; "let us see the prog—hillo!—oh, holy Moses! what a pair o' beauties!"

He then whipped up a horn measure, that contained certainly more than a naggin, and putting it under the warm spirits that came out of the still-eye, handed it to her. She took it, and coming up towards the fire, which threw out a strong light, nodded to them, and, without saying a word, literally pitched it down her throat, whilst at the same time one of her eyes presented undeniable proofs of a recent conflict. We have said that there were several persons singing and dancing, and some asleep, in the remoter part of the cave; and this was true, although we refrained from mingling up either their mirth or melody with the conversation of the principal personages. All at once, however, a series of noises, equally loud and unexpected, startled melodists, conversationalists, and sleepers all to their legs. These were no other than the piercing cackles of two alarmed geese which Hogan's wife had secured from some neighboring farmer, in order to provide a supper for our friend Hycy.

"Ted," said the female, "I lost my knife since I came out, or they'd be quiet enough before this; lend me one a minute, you blissed babe."

"Shiss, to be sure, Kate," he replied, handing her a large clasp knife with a frightful blade; "an', Kate, whisper, woman alive—you're bought up, I see."

"How is that, you red rascal?"

"Bekaise, don't I see dat de purchaser has *set his mark* upon ye?—hee! hee! hee!" and he pointed to her eye * as he spoke.

* A black eye is said to be the devil's mark.

"No," she replied, nodding towards her husband, "that's *his* handywork; an' ye divil's clip!" she added, turning to Teddy, "who has a betther right?"

She then bled the geese, and, looking about her, asked—

"Have you any wet hay or straw in the place?"

"Ay, plenty of bote," replied Teddy; "an' here's de greeshaugh ready."

She then wrapped the geese, feathers and all, separately in a covering of wet hay, which she bound round them with thumb-ropes of the same material, and clearing away a space among the burning ashes, placed each of them in it, and covered them up closely.

"Now," said she, "put down a pot o' praities, and we won't go to bed fastin'."

The different groups had now melted into one party, much upon the same principle that the various little streamlets on the mountains around them all run, when swollen by a sudden storm, into some larger torrent equally precipitous and turbulent. Keenan, who was one of those pertinacious fellows that are equally quarrelsome and hospitable when in liquor, now resumed the debate with a characteristic impression of the pugilistic superiority of his family:—

"I am right, I say: I remember it well, for although I wasn't there myself, my father was, an' I often h'ard him say—God rest his sowl!"—here he reverently took off his hat and looked upwards—"I often h'ard him say that Paddy Keenan gave Mullin the first knock-down blow, an' Pether—I mane no disrespect, but far from it—give us your hand, man alive—you're going to be married upon my shisther to-morrow, plaise God!—masther, you'll come, remimber? you'll be as welcome as the flowers o' May, masther—so, Pether, as I was sayin'—I mane no offince nor disrespect to you or yours, for you are, an' ever was, a daisent family, an' well able to fight your corner when it came upon you—but still, Pether—an' for all that—I say it—an' I'll stand to it—I'll stand it—that's the chat!—that, man for man, there never was one o' your seed, breed, or generation able to fight a Keenan—that's the chat!—here's luck!

"'Oh, 'twas in the month of May,
When the lambkins sport and play,
As I walked out to gain raycrayation,
I espied a comely maid.
Sequestrin' in the shade—
On her beauty I gazed wid admiraytion.'

No, Pether, you never could; the Mullins is good men—right good men, but they couldn't do it."

"Barney," said the brother of the bridegroom, "you may thank God that Pether *is* going to be married to your sisther to-morrow as you say, or we'd larn you another lesson—eh, masther? That's the chat too—ha! ha! ha! To the divil wid sich impedence!"

"Gintlemen," said Finigan, now staggering down towards the parties, "I am a man of pacific principles, acquainted wid the larned languages, wid mathematics, wid philosophy, the science of morality according to Fluxions—I grant you, I'm not college-bred; but, gintlemen, I never invied the oysther in its shell—for, gintlemen, I'm not ashamed of it, but I acquired—I absorbed my larning, I may say, upon locomotive principles."

"Bravo, masther!" said Keenan; "that's what some o' them couldn't say—"

"Upon locomotive principles. I admit Munster, gintlemen—glorious Kerry!—yes, and I say I am not ashamed of it. I do plead guilty to the peripatetic system: like a comet I travelled during my juvenile days—as I may truly assert wid a slight modicum of latitude" (here he lurched considerably to the one side)—"from star to star, until I was able to exhibit all their brilliancy united simply, I can safely assert, in my own humble person. Gintlemen, I have the honor of being able to write 'Philomath' after my name—which is *O'*Finigan, not Finigan, by any means—and where is the oyster in his shell could do that? Yes, and although they refused me a sizarship in Trinity College—for what will not fear and envy do?

"'*Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?*'

Yet I have the consolation to know that my name is seldom mentioned among the literati of classical Kerry—*nudis cruribus* as they are—except as the Great O'Finigan! In the mane time—"

"Bravo, Masther!" exclaimed Keenan, interrupting him. "Here, Ted! another bottle, till the Great O'Finigan gets a glass of whiskey."

"Yes, gintlemen," proceeded O'Finigan, "the alcohol shall be accepted, *puris naturalibus*—which means, in its native—or more properly—but which comes to the same thing—in its naked state; and, in the mane time, I propose the health of one of my best benefactors—Gerald Cavanagh, whose hospitable roof is a home—a *domicilium* to erudition and respectability, when they happen, as they ought, to be legitimately concatenated in the same person—as they are in your humble servant; and I also beg leave to add the pride of the barony, his fair and virtuous daughter, Kathleen, in conjunction wid the accomplished son of another benefactor of mine—honest James Burke—in conjunction,

I say, wid his son, Mr. Hyacinth. Ah, gintlemen—Billy Clinton, you thievin' villain! you don't pay attention; I say, gintlemen, if I myself could deduct a score of years from the period of my life, I should endeavor to run through the conjugations of *amo* in society wid that pearl of beauty. In the mane time—"

"Here's her health, masther," returned Keenan, "an' her father's too, an' Hycy Burke's into the bargain—is there any more o' them? Well, no matter." Then turning to his antagonist, he added, "I say agin, thin, that a Mullin's not a match for a Keenan, nor never was—no, nor never will be! That's the chat! and who's afeard to say it? eh, masther?"

"It's a lie!" shouted one of the opposite party; "I'm able to lick e'er a Keenan that ever went on nate's leather—an' that's *my* chat."

A blow from Keenan in reply was like a spark to gunpowder. In a moment the cavern presented a scene singularly tragic-comic; the whole party was one busy mass of battle, with the exception of Ted and Batt, and the wife of the latter, who, having first hastily put aside everything that might be injured, stood enjoying the conflict with most ferocious glee, the schoolmaster having already withdrawn himself to his chair. Even Barney Broghan, the fool, could not keep quiet, but on the contrary, thrust himself into the quarrel, and began to strike indiscriminately at all who came in his way, until an unlucky blow on the nose happening to draw his claret very copiously, he made a bound up behind the sill, uttering a series of howlings, as from time to time he looked at his own blood, that were amusing in the extreme. As it happened, however, the influence of liquor was too strong upon both parties to enable them to inflict on each other any serious injury. Such, however, was the midnight pastime of the still-house when our friend Hycy entered.

"What in the devil's name — or the guager's—which is worse—" he asked, addressing himself to Batt and Teddy, "is the meaning of all this?"

"Faith, you know a'most as much about it," replied Hogan, laughing, "as we do; they got drunk, an' that accounts for it."

"Mr. Burke," said Finigan, who was now quite tipsy; "I am delighted to be able to—to—yes, it is he," he added, speaking to himself—"to see you well."

"I have my doubts as to that, Mr. Finigan," replied Hycy.

"Fame, Mr. Burke," continued the other, "has not been silent with regard to your exploits. Your horsemanship, sir, and the intrepid pertinacity with which you fasten upon the reluctant society of men of rank, have given you a notorious celebrity, of which your worthy father, honest Jemmy, as he is called, ought to be justly proud. And you shine, Mr. Burke, in the loves as well as in the—*tam veneri quam*—I was about to add *Marti*, but it would be inappropriate, or might only remind you of poor Biddy Martin. It is well known you are a most accomplished gintleman, Mr. Burke—*homo factus ad unguem—ad unguem.*"

Hycy would have interrupted the schoolmaster, but that he felt puzzled as to whether he spoke seriously or ironically; his attention besides was divided between him and the party in conflict.

"Come," said he, addressing Hogan and Teddy, "put an end to this work, and why did you, you misbegotten vagabond," he added, turning to the latter, "suffer these fellows to remain here when you knew I was to come up?"

"I must shell my fwisky," replied Teddy, sullenly, "fwhedher you come or stay."

"If you don't clear the place of them instantly," replied Hycy, "I shall return home again."

Hogan seemed a good deal alarmed at this intimation, and said—"Ay, indeed, Terry, we had better put them out o' this."

"Fwhor fwhat?" asked Teddy, "dere my best customers shure—an' fwhy would I quarrel wid 'em all fwor wan man?"

"Good-night, then, you mis-shapen ruffian," said Burke, about to go.

"Aisy, Mr. Burke," said Hogan; "we'll soon make short work wid them. Here, Ted, you devil's catch-penny, come an' help me! Hillo, here!" he shouted, "what are you at, you gallows crew? Do you want to go to the stone jug, I say? Be off out o' this—here's the guager, blast him, an' the sogers! Clear out, I tell you, or every mother's son of you will sleep undher the skull and cross-bones to-night."*

"Here you, Barney," whispered Teddy, who certainly did not wish that Burke should return as he came; "here, you great big fwhool you, give past your yowlin' dere—and lookin' at your blood—run out dere, come in an' shout the gauger an' de sogers."

Barney, who naturally imagined that the intelligence was true, complied with the order he had received in a spirit of such alarming and dreadful earnestness, that a few minutes found the still-house completely cleared of the two parties, not excepting Hogan himself, who, having heard nothing of Teddy's directions to the fool, took it now for

* Meaning the county prison.

granted that that alarm was a real one, and ran along with the rest. The schoolmaster had fallen asleep, Kate Hogan was engaged in making preparations for supper at the lower end of the cavern, and the fool had been dispatched to fetch Hogan himself back, so that Hycy now saw there was a good opportunity for stating at more length than he could in the market the purpose of his visit.

"Teddy," said he, "now that the coast's clear, let us lose no time in coming to the point. You are aware that Bryan M'Mahon has come into the mountain farm of Ahadarra by the death of his uncle."

"Shiss; dese three years."

"You *will* stick to your cursed brogue," said the other; "however, that's your own affair. You are aware of this?"

"I am."

"Well, I have made my mind up to take another turn at *this*," and he tapped the side of the still with his stick; "and I'll try it there. I don't know a better place, and it is much more convenient than this."

Teddy looked at him from under his brows, but seemed rather at a loss to comprehend his meaning.

"Fwor fhy 'ud you go to Ahadarra?"

"It's more convenient, and quite as well adapted for it as this place, or nearly."

"Well! Shiss, well?"

"Well; why that's all I have to say about it, except that I'm not to be seen or known in the business at all—mark that."

"Shiss—well? De Hogans must know it?"

"I am aware of that; we couldn't go on without them. This running of your's will soon be over; very well. You can go to Ahadarra to-morrow and pitch upon a proper situation for a house. These implements will do."

"No, dey won't; I wouldn't tink to begin at all wid dat ould skillet. You must get de Hogans to make a new Still-Head and Worm, an' dat will be money down."

"Very well; I'll provide the needful; let Philip call to me in a day or two."

"Dat Ahadarra isn't so safe," said Teddy. "Fwhy wouldn't you carry it on *here?*" and he accompanied the query with a piercing glance as he spoke.

"Because," replied Hycy, "I have been seen here too often already, and my name must not in any way be connected with your proceedings. This place, besides, is now too much known. It's best and safest to change our bob, Ted."

"Dere's trewt in dhat, anyhow," said the other, now evidently more satisfied as to Hycy's motive in changing. "But," he added, "as you *is* now to schange, it 'ud be gooder to shange to some better place nor Ahadarra."

"I know of none better or safer," said Burke.

"Ay, fifty," returned his companion, resuming his suspicious looks; "but no matther, any way you must only plaise yerself—'tis all the shame to me."

"Ahadarra it must be then," said the other, "and that ends it."

"Vary well, den, Ahadarra let her be," said Ted, and the conversation on this subject dropped.

The smuggler's supper now made it's appearance. The geese were beautifully done, and as Hycy's appetite had got a keen stimulus by his mountain walk, he rendered them ample justice.

"Trot," said Teddy, "sich a walk as you had droo de mountains was enough to sharpen anybody's appetite."

Hogan also plied him with punch, having provided himself with sugar for that express purpose. Hycy, however, was particularly cautious, and for a long time declined to do more than take a little spirits and water. It was not, in fact, until he had introduced the name of Kathleen Cavanagh that he consented to taste punch. Between the two, however, Burke's vanity was admirably played on; and Hogan wound up the dialogue by hinting that Hycy, no matter how appearances might go, was by no means indifferent to the interesting daughter of the house of Cavanagh.

At length, when the night was far advanced, Burke rose, and taking his leave like a man who had forgotten some appointment, but with a very pompous degree of condescension, sought his way in the direction of home, across the mountains.

He had scarcely gone, when Hogan, as if struck by a sudden recollection, observed as he thought it would be ungenerous to allow him, at that hour of the night, to cross the mountains by himself. He accordingly whispered a few words to his wife, and left them with an intention, as he said, to see Mr. Hycy safe home.

CHAPTER V.

Who Robbed Jemmy Burke?

On the second morning after the night described in the last chapter, Bryan M'Mahon had just returned to his father's house from his farm in Ahadarra, for the purpose of accompanying him to an Emigration auction in the neighborhood. The two farms of Carri-

glass and Ahadarra had been in the family of the M'Mahon's for generations, and were the property of the same landlord. About three years previous to the period of our narrative, Toal M'Mahon, Bryan's uncle, died of an inflammatory attack, leaving to his eldest nephew and favorite the stock farm of Ahadarra. Toal had been a bachelor who lived wildly and extravagantly, and when he died Bryan suceeeded to the farm, then as wild, by the way, and as much neglected as its owner had been, with an arrear of two years' rent upon it. In fact the house and offices had gone nearly to wreck, and when Bryan entered into occupation he found that a large sum of money should be expended in necessary improvements ere the place could assume anything like a decent appearance. As a holding, however, it was reasonable; and we may safely assert that if Toal M'Mahon had been either industrious or careful he might have lived and died a wealthy man upon it. As Ahadarra lay in the mountain district, it necessarily covered a large space; in fact it constituted a townland in itself. The greater portion of it, no doubt, was barren mountain, but then there were about three hundred acres of strong rough land that was either reclaimed or capable of being so. Bryan, who had not only energy and activity, but capital to support both, felt, on becoming master of a separate farm, that peculiar degree of pride which was only natural to a young and enterprising man. He had now a fair opportunity, he thought, of letting his friends see what skill and persevering exertion could do. Accordingly he commenced his improvements in a spirit which at least deserved success. He proceeded upon the best system then known to intelligent agriculturalists, and nothing was left undone that he deemed necessary to work out his purposes. He drained, reclaimed, made fences, roads, and enclosures. Nor did he stop here. We said that the house and offices were in a ruinous state when they came into his possession, and the consequence was that he found it necessary to build a new dwelling house and suitable offices, which he did on a more commodious and eligible site. Altogether his expenditure on the farm could not have been less than eight hundred pounds at the period of the landlord's death, which, as the reader knows is that at which we have commenced our narrative.

Thomas M'Mahon's family consisted of—first, his father, a grey-haired patriarch, who, though a very old man, was healthy and in the full possession of all his faculties; next, himself; then his wife; Bryan, the proprietor of Ahadarra; two other sons, both younger, and two daughters, the eldest twenty, and the youngest about eighteen. The name of the latter was Dora, a sweet and gentle girl, with beautiful auburn hair, dark, brilliant eyes, full of intellect and feeling, an exquisite mouth, and a figure which was remarkable for natural grace and great symmetry.

"Well, Bryan," said the father, "what news from Ahadarra?"

"Nothing particular from Ahadarra," replied the son, "but our good-natured friend, Jemmy Burke, had his house broken open and robbed the night before last."

"*Wurrah deheelish*," exclaimed his mother, "no, he hadn't!"

"Well, mother," replied Bryan, laughing, "maybe not. I'm afeard it's too true though."

"An' how much did he lose?" asked his father.

"Between seventy and eighty pounds," said Bryan.

"It's too much," observed the other; "still I'm glad it's no more; an' since the villains *did* take it, it's well they tuck it from a man that can afford to lose it."

"By all accounts," said Arthur, or, as he was called, Art, "Hycy, the *sportheen*, has pulled him down a bit. He's not so rich now, they say, as he was three or four years ago."

"He's rich enough still," observed his father; "but at any rate, upon my sowl I'm sorry for him; he's the crame of an honest, kind-hearted neighbor; an' I believe in my conscience if there's a man alive that hasn't an ill-wisher, he is."

"Is it known who robbed him?" asked the grandfather, "or does he suspect anybody?"

"It's not known, of course, grandfather," replied Bryan, "or I suppose they would be in limbo before now; but there's quare talk about it. The Hogans is suspected, it seems. Philip was caught exminin' the hall-door the night before; an' that *does* look suspicious."

"Ay," said the old man, "an' very likely they're the men. I remember them this many a long day; it's forty years since Andy Hogan—he was lame—Andy *Boccah* they called him—was hanged for the murdher of your great-granduncle, Billy Shevlin, of Frughmore, so that they don't like a bone in our bodies. That was the only murdher I remember of them, but many a robbery was laid to their charge; an' every now and then there was always sure to be an odd one transported for thievin', an' house-breakin', and sich villainy."

"I wouldn't be surprised," said Mrs. M'Mahon, "but it was some o' them tuck our two brave geese the night before last."

"Very likely, in throth, Bridget," said her husband; "however, as the ould proverb has it, 'honesty's the best policy.' Let them see which of us 'll be the best off at the end of the year."

"There's an odd whisper here an' there about another robber," continued Bryan; "but I don't believe a word about it. No, no;—he's wild, and not scrupulous in many things, but I always thought him generous, an' indeed rather careless about money."

"You mane the *sportheen?*" said his brother Art.

"The Hogans," said the old man, recurring to the subject, as associated with them, "would rob anybody barrin' the Cavanaghs; but I won't listen to it, Bryan, that Hycy Burke, or the son of any honest man that ever had an opportunity of hearin' the Word o' God, or livin' in a Christian counthry, could ever think of robbin' his own father—his own father! I won't listen to that."

"No, nor I, grandfather," said Bryan, "putting everything else out of the question, its too unnatural an act. What makes *you* shake your head, Art?"

"I never liked a bone in his body, somehow," replied Art.

"Ay, but my goodness, Art," said Dora, "sure nobody would think of robbin' their own father?"

"He has been doin' little else these three years, Dora, by all accounts," replied Art.

"Ay, but his father," continued the innocent girl; "to break into the house at night an' rob him like a robber!"

"Well, I say, it's reported that he has been robbin' him these three years in one shape or other," continued Art; "but here's Shibby, let's hear what she'll say. What do you think, shibby?"

"About what, Art?"

"That Hycy Burke would rob his father!"

"Hut, tut! Art, what puts that into your head? Oh, no, Art—not at all—to rob his father, an' him has been so indulgent to him!"

"Indeed, I agree with you, Shibby," said Bryan; "for although my opinion of Hycy is changed very much for the worse of late, still I can't and won't give in to that."

"An what has changed it for the worse?" asked his mother. "You an' he wor very thick together always—eh? What has changed it, Bryan?"

Bryan began to rub his hand down the sleeve of his coat, as if freeing it from dust, or perhaps admiring its fabric, but made no reply.

"Eh, Bryan," she continued, "what has changed your opinion of him?"

"Oh, nothing of much consequence, mother," replied her son; "but sometimes a feather will tell one how the wind blows."

As he spoke, it might have been observed that he looked around upon the family with an appearance of awakened consciousness that was very nearly allied to shame. He recovered his composure, however, on perceiving that none among them gave, either by look or manner, any indication of understanding what he felt. This relieved him: but he soon found that the sense of relief experienced from it was not permitted to last long. Dora, his favorite sister, glided over to his side and gently taking his hand in hers began to play with his fingers, whilst a roguish laugh, that spoke a full consciousness of his secret, broke her pale but beautiful features into that mingled expression of smiles and blushes which, in one of her years, gives a look of almost angelic purity and grace. After about a minute or two, during which she paused, and laughed, and blushed, and commenced to whisper, and again stopped, she at last put her lips to his ear and whispered:—"Bryan, *I* know the reason you don't like Hycy."

"You do?" he said, laughing, but yet evidently confused in his turn;—"well—an'—ha!—ha!—no, you fool, you don't."

"May I never stir if I don't!"

"Well, an' what is it?"

"Why, bekaise he's coortin' Kathleen Cavanagh—now!"

"An' what do I care about that?" said her brother.

"Oh, you thief!" she replied; "don't think you can play upon me. I know your saycret."

"An' maybe, Dora," he replied, "I have my saycrets. Do you know who was inquirin' for you to-day?"

"No," she returned, "nor I don't care either—sorra bit."

"I met James Cavanagh there below"—he proceeded, still in a whisper, and he fixed his eyes upon her countenance as he spoke. The words, however, produced a most extraordinary effect. A deep blush crimsoned her whole neck and face, until the rush of blood seemed absolutely to become expressive of pain. Her eye, however, did not droop, but turned upon him with a firm and peculiar sparkle. She had been stooping with her mouth near his ear, as the reader knows, but she now stood up quickly, shook back her hair, that had been hanging in natural and silken curls about her blushing cheeks, and exclaimed: "No—no. Let me alone Bryan;" and on uttering these words she hurried into another room.

"Bryan, you've vexed Dora some way,"

observed her sister. "What did you say to her?"

"Nothing that vexed her, I'll go bail," he replied, laughing; "however, as to what I said to her, Shibby, ax me no questions an' I'll tell you no lies."

"Becaise I thought she looked as if she was angry," continued Shibby, "an', you know, it must be a strong provocation that would anger *her*."

"Ah, you're fishin' now, Shibby," he replied, "and many thanks for your good intentions. It's a saycret, an' that's all you're going to know about it. But it's as much as 'ill keep you on the look out this month to come; and now you're punished for your curiosity—ha!—ha!—ha! Come, father, if we're to go to Sam Wallace's auction it's time we should think of movin'. Art, go an' help Tom Droogan to bring out the horses. Rise your foot here, father, an' I'll put on your spur for you. We may as well spake to Mr. Fethertonge, the agent, about the leases. I promised we'd call on Gerald Cavanagh, to—an' he'll be waitin' for us—hem!"

His eye here glanced about, but Dora was not visible, and he accordingly seemed to be more at his ease. "I think, father," he added, "I must trate you to a pair of spurs some of these days. This one, it's clear, has been a long time in the family."

"Throth, an' on that account," replied M'Mahon, "I'm not goin' to part wid it for the best pair that ever were made. No, no, Bryan; I like everything that I've known long. When my heart gets accustomed to anything or to anybody"—here he glanced affectionately at his wife—"I can't bear to part wid them, or to think of partin' wid them."

The horses were now ready, and in a brief space he and his son were decently mounted, the latter smartly but not inappropriately dressed; and M'Mahon himself, with his right spur, in a sober but comfortable suit, over which was a huge Jock, his inseparable companion in every fair, market, and other public place, during the whole year. Indeed, it would not be easy to find two better representatives of that respectable and independent class of Irish yeomanry of which our unfortunate country stands so much in need, as was this man of high integrity and his excellent son.

On arriving at Gerald Cavanagh's, which was on their way to the auction, it appeared that in order to have his company it was necessary they should wait for a little, as he was not yet ready. That worthy man they found in the act of shaving himself, seated very upright upon a chair in the kitchen, his eyes fixed with great steadiness upon the opposite wall, whilst lying between his legs upon the ground was a wooden dish half filled with water, and on a chair beside him a small looking-glass, with its back up, which, after feeling his face from time to time in an experimental manner, he occasionally peeped into, and again laid down to resume the operation.

In the mean time, Mrs. Cavanagh set forward a chair for Tom M'Mahon, and desired her daughter Hannah to place one for Bryan, which she did. The two girls were spinning, and it might have been observed that Kathleen appeared to apply herself to that becoming and feminine employment with double industry after the appearance of the M'Mahons. Kate Hogan was sitting in the chimney corner, smoking a pipe, and as she took it out of her mouth to whiff away the smoke from time to time, she turned her black piercing eyes alternately from Bryan M'Mahon to Kathleen with a peculiar keenness of scrutiny.

"An' how are you all up at Carriglass?" asked Mrs. Cavanagh.

"Indeed we can't complain, thank God, as the times goes," replied M'Mahon.

"An' the ould grandfather?—musha, but I was glad to see him look so well on Sunday last!"

"Troth he's as stout as e'er a one of us."

"The Lord continue it to him! I suppose you hard o' this robbery that was done at honest Jemmy Burke's?"

"I did, indeed, an' I was sorry to hear it."

"A hundre' an' fifty pounds is a terrible loss to anybody in such times."

"A hundre' an' fifty!" exclaimed M'Mahon—"hut, tut!—no; I thought it was only seventy or eighty. He did not lose so much, did he?"

"So I'm tould."

"It was two—um—it was two—um—um—it was—um—um—it was two hundre' itself," observed Cavanagh, after he had finished a portion of the operation, and given himself an opportunity of speaking—"it was two hundre' itself, I'm tould, an' that's too much, by a hundre' and ninety-nine pounds nineteen shillings an' eleven pence three fardens, to be robbed of."

"Troth it is, Gerald," replied M'Mahon; "but any way there's nothin' but thievin' and robbin' goin'. You didn't hear that we came in for a visit?"

"You!" exclaimed Mrs. Cavanagh—"is it robbed? My goodness, no!"

"Why," he proceeded, "we'll be able to get over it afore we die, I hope. On ere last night we had two of our fattest geese stolen."

"Two!" exclaimed Mrs. Cavanagh—"an'

at this saison of the year, too. Well, that same's a loss."

"Honest woman," said M'Mahon, addressing Kate Hogan, "maybe you'd give me a draw o' the pipe?"

"Maybe so," she replied; "an' why wouldn't I? *Shough!* that is *here!*"

"Long life to you, Katy. Well," proceeded the worthy man, "if it was a poor person that wanted them an' that took them from hardship, why God forgive them as heartily as I do: but if they wor stole by a thief, for thievin's sake, I hope I'll always be able to afford the loss of a pair betther than the thief will to do without them; although God mend his or her heart, whichever it was, in the mane time."

During this chat Bryan and Hanna Cavanagh were engaged in that good-humored *badinage* that is common to persons of their age and position.

"I didn't see you at Mass last Sunday, Bryan?" said she, laughing; "an' that's the way you attend to your devotions. Upon my word you promise well!"

"I seen you, then," replied Bryan, "so it seems if I haven't betther eyes I have betther eyesight."

"Indeed I suppose," she replied, "you see everything but what you go to see."

"Don't be too sure of that," he replied, with an involuntary glance at Kathleen, who seemed to enjoy her sister's liveliness, as was evident from the sweet and complacent smile which beamed upon her features.

"Indeed I suppose you're right," she replied; "I suppose you go to say everything but your prayers."

"An' is it in conversation with Jemmy Kelly," asked Bryan, jocularly, alluding to her supposed admirer, "that you perform your own devotions, Miss Hanna?"

"Hanna, achora," said the father, "I think you're playin' the second fiddle there—ha! ha! ha!"

The laugh was now general against Hanna, who laughed as loudly, however, as any of them.

"Throth, Kathleen," she exclaimed, "you're not worth knot's o' straws or you'd help me against this fellow here; have you nothing," she proceeded, addressing Bryan, and nodding towards her sister, "to say to *her?* Is everything to fall on my poor shoulders? Come, now," with another nod in the same direction, "she desarves it for not assistin' me. Who does she say her devotions with?"

"Hem—a—is it Kathleen you mane?" he inquired, with rather an embarrassed look.

"Not at all," she replied ironically, "but my mother there—ha! ha! ha! Come, now, we're waitin' for you."

"Come, now?" he repeated, purposely misunderstanding her—"oh, begad, that's a fair challenge;" and he accordingly rose to approach her with the felonious intent of getting a kiss; but Hanna started from her wheel and ran out of the house to avoid him.

"Throth, you're a madcap, Hanna," exclaimed her mother, placidly—"an antick crather, dear knows—her heart's in her mouth every minute of the day; an' if she gets through the world wid it always as light, poor girl, it'll be well for her."

"Kathleen, will you get me a towel or praskeen of some sort to wipe my face wid," said her father, looking about for the article he wanted.

"I left one," she replied, "on the back of your chair—an' there it is, sure."

"Ay, achora, it's you that laves nothing undone that ought to be done; an' so it is here, sure enough."

"Why, then, Gerald," asked Tom M'Mahon, "in the name o' wonder what makes you stick to the meal instead o' the soap when you're washin' yourself?"

"Throth, an' I ever will, Tom, an' for a good raison—becaise it's best for the complexion."

The unconscious simplicity with which Cavanagh uttered this occasioned loud laughter, from which Kathleen herself was unable to refrain.

"By the piper, Gerald," said M'Mahon, "that's the best thing I h'ard this month o' Sundays. Why, it would be enough for one o' your daughters to talk about complexion. Maybe you paint too—ha! ha! ha!"

Hanna now put in her head, and asked "what is the fun?" but immediately added, "Kathleen, here's a message for you."

"For me!" said Kathleen; "what is it?"

"Here's Peety Dhu's daughter, an' she says she has something to say to you."

"An' so Rosha Burke," said Mrs. Cavanagh, "has taken her to live wid them; I hope it'll turn out well for the poor thing."

"Will you come out, Kathleen," said Hanna, again peeping in; "she mustn't tell it to anyone but yourself."

"If she doesn't she may keep it, then," replied Kathleen. "Tell her I have no secrets," she added, "nor I won't have any of her keeping."

"You must go in," said Hanna, turning aside and addressing the girl—"you must go in an' spake to her in the house."

"She can tell us all about the robbery,

anyway," observed Mr. Cavanagh. "Come in, *a-colleen*—what are you afeard of?"

"I have a word to say to her," said the girl—"a message to deliver; but it must be to nobody but herself. Whisper," she proceeded, approaching Kathleen, and about to address her.

Kathleen immediately rose, and, looking on the messenger, said, "Who is it from, Nanny?"

"I mustn't let *them* know," replied the girl, looking at the rest.

"Whatever it is, or whoever it's from, you must spake it out then, Nanny," continued Kathleen.

"It's from Hycy Burke, then," replied the girl; "he wants to know if you have any answer for him?"

"Tell Hycy Burke," replied Kathleen, "that I have *no* answer for him; an' that I'll thank him to send me no more messages."

"Hut tut! you foolish girl," exclaimed her mother, rising up and approaching her daughter; "are you mad, Kathleen?"

"What's come over you," said the father, equally alarmed; "are you beside yourself, sure enough, to send Hycy Burke sich a message as that? Sit down, *ma colleen*, sit down, an' never mind her—don't think of bringin' him back sich a message. Why, then," he added, "in the name o' mercy, Kathleen, what has come over you, to trate a respectable young man like Hycy Burke in that style?"

"Simply, father, because I don't wish to receive any messages at all from him."

"But your mother an' I is of a different opinion, Kathleen. *We* wish you to resave messages from him; an' you know you're bound both by the laws of God an' man to obey us an' be guided by us."

"I know I am, father," she replied; "an' I hope I haven't been an undutiful child to either of you for so far."

"That's true, Kathleen—God sees it's truth itself."

"What message do you expect to bring back, Nanny?" said the mother, addressing the girl.

"An answer," replied the girl, seeing that everything must be and was above board—"an answer to the letther he sent her."

"Did he send you a letther?" asked her father, seriously; "an' you never let us know a word about it?—did he send you a letther?"

Kathleen paused a moment and seemed to consult Hanna's looks, who had now joined them. At length she replied, slowly, and as if in doubt whether she ought to speak in the affirmative or not—"no, he sent me no letter."

"Well now, take care, Kathleen," said her mother; "I seen a letther in your hands this very mornin'."

Kathleen blushed deeply; but as if anxious to give the conversation another turn, and so to relieve herself, she replied, "I can't prevent you, mother, or my father either, from sending back whatever answer you wish; but this I say that, except the one I gave already, Hycy Burke will never receive any message or any answer to a message from me; an' now for the present let us drop it."

"Very well," said her mother; "in the mane time, my good *girsha*, sit down. Is it thrue that Jemmy Burke's house was robbed a couple o' nights ago?"

"True enough," said the girl.

"And how much did he lose?" asked M'Mahon; "for there's disputes about it—some say more and some say less."

"Between seventy and eighty pounds," replied Nanny; "the masther isn't sure to a pound or so; but he knows it was near eighty, any way."

"That's just like him," said Cavanagh; "his careless way of managin'. Many a time I wondher at him;—he slobbers everything about that you'd think he'd beggar himself, an' yet the luck and prosperity flows to him. I declare to my goodness I think the very dirt under his feet turns to money. Well, *girsha*, an' have they any suspicion of the robbers?"

"Why," said the girl, "they talk about"—she paused, and it was quite evident from her manner that she felt not only embarrassed, but distressed by the question. Indeed this was no matter of surprise; for ever since the subject was alluded to, Kate Hogan's black piercing eyes had not once been removed from hers, nor did the girl utter a single word in reply to the questions asked of her without first, as it were, consulting Kate's looks.

A moment's reflection made Cavanagh feel that the question must be a painful one to the girl, not only on her own account, but on that of Kate herself; for even then it was pretty well known that Burke's family entertained the strongest suspicion that the burglary had been committed by these notorious vagabonds.

"Well, *ahagur*," said Cavanagh, "no matter now—it's all over unless they catch the robbers. Come now," he added, addressing M'Mahon and his son, "if you're for the road I'm ready."

"Is it true, Mrs. Burke," asked Bryan, "that you're goin' to have a *Kemp* in your barn some o' these days?"

"True enough, indeed," replied the good

woman, "an' that's true, too, tell the girls, Bryan, and that they must come."

"Not I," said the other, laughing; "if the girls here wishes them to come, let them go up and ask them."

"So we will, then," replied Hanna, "an little thanks to you for your civility."

"I wish I knew the evenin'," said Bryan, "that I might be at Carriglass."

"When will we go, Kathleen," asked her sister, turning slyly to her.

"Why, you're sich a light-brained cracked creature," replied Kathleen, "that I can't tell whether you're joking or not."

"The sorra joke I'm jokin'," she replied, striving suddenly to form her features into a serious expression. "Well, then, I have it," she proceeded. "Some *Thursday*, Bryan, in the middle o' next week—now you know I'm not jokin', Kathleen."

"Will *you* come, Kathleen?" inquired Bryan.

"Why, if Hanna goes, I suppose I must," she replied, but without looking up.

"Well then I'll have a sharp look-out on Thursday."

"Come now," said Gerald, "let us move. Give the *girsha* something to ate among you, for the credit of the house, before she goes back," he added. "Paddy Toole, girth that horse tighter, I tell you; I never can get you to girth him as he ought to be girthed."

On bidding the women good-bye, Bryan looked towards Kathleen for a moment, and her eye in return glanced on him as he was about to go. But that simple glance, how significant was its import, and how clearly did it convey the whole history of as pure a heart as ever beat within a female bosom!

CHAPTER VI.

Nanny Peety looks mysterious, and Hycy proves himself a good Judge of Horse-Flesh.

The day was all light, and life, and animation. The crops were going down fast in every direction, and the fields were alive and cheerful with the voice of mirth and labor. As they got into the vicinity of Wallace's house they overtook or were overtaken by several of their neighbors, among whom was seen our old friend, Jemmy, or as his acquaintances generally called him, *honest Jemmy Burke*, mounted upon a brood mare with a foal at her heels, all his other horses having been engaged in the labor of the season.

After having sympathized with him upon the loss he had sustained, they soon allowed the subject to drop; for it was quite clear from the expression of care, if not of sorrow, that was legible in his face, that the very mention of it only caused him to feel additional anxiety.

At length they reached Wallace's house, where they found a tolerably large crowd of people waiting for the auction, which was not to commence until the hour of one o'clock.

Sam Wallace was a respectable Protestant farmer, who finding, as he said, that there was no proper encouragement given to men who were anxious and disposed to improve their property, had deemed it a wiser step to dispose of his stock and furniture than to remain as he was — not merely with no certain prospect of being able to maintain even his present position, but with the chances against him of becoming every day a poorer and more embarrassed man. His brother, who like himself, after having been on the decline for a considerable period, had emigrated to America, where he was prospering, now urged him to follow his example and leave a country in which he said, in language that has become a proverb, "everything was going to the bad." Feeling that his brother's words were unfortunately too true, Wallace, at all events, came to the determination of following his example.

The scene at which our friends arrived was indeed a striking and impressive one. The majority of the crowd consisted of those who belonged either to the Protestant or Presbyterian forms of worship; and it might be with truth asserted, that nothing could surpass the clear unquestionable character of independent intelligence which prevailed among them. Along with this, however, there was an obvious spirit of dissatisfaction, partial, it is true, as to numbers, but yet sufficiently marked as to satisfy an observer that such a people, if united upon any particular subject or occasion, were not for a moment to be trifled with or cajoled. Their feelings upon the day in question were stirrred into more than usual warmth. A friend, a neighbor, a man of an old and respectable family, frugal, industrious, and loyal, as they said, both to king and country, was now forced from want of due encouragement from his landlord, to disturb all his old associations of friendship and kindred, and at rather an advanced state of life to encounter the perils of a long voyage, and subject himself and his family to the changes and chances which he must encounter in a new world, and in a different state of society. Indeed, the feeling which prompted the expression of these sentiments might be easily gathered from the character that pervaded

the crowd. Not to such an extent, however, with respect to Wallace himself or any portion of his family, There might be observed upon him and them a quiet but resolute spirit, firm, collected, and cheerful; but still, while there were visible no traces of dejection or grief, it was easy to perceive that under this decent composure there existed a calm consciousness of strong stern feeling, whose dignity, if not so touching, was quite as impressive as the exhibition of louder and more clamorous grief.

"Bryan," said M'Mahon to his son, as the auction was proceeding, "I'll slip up to the agent's, and do you see if them sheep goes for a fair value—if they do, give a bid or two any how. I'm speakin' of that lot we wor lookin' at, next the wall there."

"I'll pay attention to it," said Bryan; "I know you'll find the agent at home now, for I seen him goin' in a while ago; so hurry up, an' ax him if he can say *how soon* we may expect the leases."

"Never fear, I will."

On entering Fethertonge's Hall, M'Mahon was treated with very marked respect by the servant, who told him to walk into the parlor, and he would let his master know.

"He entertains a high opinion of you, Mister M'Mahon," said he; "and I heard him speak strongly about you the other day to some gentlemen that dined with us—friends of the landlord's. Walk into the parlor."

In a few minutes M'Mahon was shown into Fethertonge's office, the walls of which were, to a considerable height, lined with tin boxes, labelled with the names of those whose title-deeds and other valuable papers they contained.

Fethertonge was a tall, pale, placid looking man, with rather a benevolent cast of countenance, and eyes that were mild, but very small in proportion to the other features of his face. His voice was exceedingly low, and still more musical and sweet than low; in fact it was such a voice as, one would imagine, ought to have seldom been otherwise employed than in breathing hope and consolation to despairing sinners on their bed of death. Yet he had nothing of either the parson or the preacher in his appearance. So far from that he was seldom known to wear a black coat, unless when dressed for dinner, and not very frequently even then, for he mostly wore blue.

"M'Mahon," said he, "take a seat. I am glad to see you. How are your family?"

"Both I an' they is well, I'm thankful to you, sir," replied the farmer.

"I hope you got safe home from the metropolis. How did you travel?"

"Troth, I walked it, sir, every inch of the way, an' a long stretch it is. I got safe, sir, an' many thanks to you."

"That was a sudden call poor Mr. Chevydale got, but not more so than might, at his time of life, have been expected; at all events I hope he was prepared for it, and indeed I have reason to think he was."

"I trust in God he was, sir," replied M'Mahon; "so far as I and mine is consarned, we have raison to wish it; he didn't forget us, Mr. Fethertonge."

"No," said the other, after some pause, "he did not indeed forget you, M'Mahon."

"I tuck the liberty of callin' down, sir," proceeded M'Mahon, "about the leases he spoke of, an' to know how soon we may expect to have them filled."

"That is for your son Bryan and yourself. How is Bryan proceeding with Ahadarra, by the way? I spoke to him some time ago about his system of cropping that farm, and some other matters of the kind; I must ride up one of these days to see how he is doing. As to the leases, there is no difficulty in the way, M'Mahon, except to get our young landlord to sign them. That we will easily do, of course; in the meantime, do you go on, improve your land, and strive to do something for your children, M'Mahon; for, in this world, he that won't assist himself will find very few that will. The leases are in Dublin; if you wish, I'll send for them, and have them ready for the landlord's signature whenever he comes down here; or I'll leave them in town, where I shall be more likely to see him."

"Very well, sir," replied M'Mahon, "I lave it all in your own hands, for I know that if you won't be my friend, you won't be my enemy."

"Well—certainly—I hope not. Will you take anything? Here, James, bring in some brandy."

M'Mahon's protest against the brandy was anything but invincible. Fethertonge's manner was so kind, so familiar, and his interest in the success of himself and his family so unaffectedly warm and sincere, that, after drinking his health, he took his leave with a light and happy heart.

Their journey home was a little more lively than the depression of Jemmy Burke's mind had allowed it to be on their way to the auction. Yet each had his own peculiar feelings, independently of those which were elicited by the conversation. Jemmy Burke, who had tasted some of Wallace's liquor, as indeed, with the exception of Bryan, they all did, was consequently in a better and more loquacious humor than he had been during the day. On this occasion his usual good

fortune attended him; for it was the opinion of every one there, that he had got the best bargain disposed of during the day—a lot of twenty-five wethers in prime condition. Gerald Cavanagh, who had also tasted the poteen, stuck as closely as possible to his skirts, moved thereto by a principle of adhesion, with which our readers are already acquainted; and Bryan, who saw and understood his motives, felt by no means comfortable at witnessing such strong symptoms of excessive attachment. Old M'Mahon did not speak much, for, in truth, he could not overcome the depressing effects of the scene he had witnessed, nor of the words uttered by Wallace, as they bade each other farewell.

Burke, however, and his companion, Cavanagh, looked like men between whom a warm friendship was about to grow up. Whenever they came to a public-house or a shebeen, they either dismounted and had a cordial drop together, or took it in the saddle after touching each other's glasses in token of love and amity. It is true some slight interruption occurred, that disturbed the growing confidence and familiarity of their dialogue, which interruption consisted in the endless whinnying of the mare whenever her foal delayed a moment behind her, or in the sudden and abrupt manner in which she wheeled about with a strong disposition to return and look for it.

On the discovery of Burke's robbery an investigation was set on foot, but with no prospect of success, and without in any way involving the Hogans, who were strongly suspected. It was clearly proved that Philip and one of his brothers slept in their usual residence — Cavanagh's corn-kiln — on that night, but it was admitted that Batt Hogan and his wife Kate were both abroad the greater portion of it. On them suspicion might, indeed, very naturally have rested, were it not for the evidence of Hycy himself, who at once admitted that he could exonerate them from any suspicion, as he knew both how and where they had passed the night in question. So far, therefore, the Hogans, dishonest as they were unquestionably reputed to be, now stood perfectly exonerated from all suspicion.

The lapse of a very few days generally cools down the ferment occasioned by matters of this kind, especially when public curiosity is found to be at fault in developing the whole train of circumstances connected with them. All the in-door servants, it is true, were rigorously examined, yet it somehow happened that Hycy could not divest himself of a suspicion that Nanny Peety was in some way privy to the disappearance of the money. In about three or four days he happened to see her thrust something into her father's bag, which he carried as a mendicant, and he could not avoid remarking that there was in her whole manner, which was furtive and hurried, an obvious consciousness of something that was not right. He resolved, however, to follow up the impression which he felt, and accordingly in a few minutes after her father had taken his departure, he brought her aside, and without giving her a moment to concoct a reply, he asked what it was that he saw her thrusting in such a hurried manner into his bag. She reddened like scarlet, and, after pausing a moment, replied, "Nothing, sir, but an ould pair of shoes."

"Was that all?" he asked.

"That was all, sir," she replied.

The blush and hesitation, however, with which she answered him were far from satisfactory; and without more ado he walked briskly down the avenue, and overtook her father near the gate at its entrance.

"Peety," said he, "what was that your daughter Nanny put into your bag a while ago? I wish to know?"

"Deed an' its scarcely worth your while, Master Hycy," replied the mendicant; "but since you'd like to know, it was a pair of ould brogues, and here they are," he added, "if you wish to see them."

He laid down the bag as he spoke, and was proceeding to pull them out, when Hycy, who felt angry with himself as well as ashamed at being detected in such a beggarly and unbecoming act of *espionage*, turned instantly back, after having vented several hearty curses upon the unfortunate mendicant and his bags.

As he approached the hall-door, however, he met Nanny crossing into the kitchen-yard, and from the timid and hesitating glance she cast at him, some vague suspicion again occurred, and he resolved to enter into further conversation with her. It struck him that she had been watching his interview with her father, and could not avoid yielding to the impression which had returned so strongly upon him.

"I saw your father, Nanny," he said, in as significant and dry a tone as possible.

"Did you, sir?" said she; and he remarked that while uttering the words, she again colored deeply and did not raise her eyes to his face.

"Yes," he replied; "but he did not bear out what you said—he had no pair of shoes in his bag."

"Did you see what he had in it, Master Hycy?"

"Why," said he, "a—hem—a—a—I didn't look—but I'll tell you what, Nanny, I think

you look as if you were in possession of some secret. I say so, and don't imagine you can for a moment impose upon me. I know what your father had in his bag."

"Well then, if you do, sir," she replied, "you know the saycrit."

"So there *is* a secret, then?"

"So *you* say, Masther Hycy."

"Nanny," he proceeded, "it occurs to me now that you never underwent a formal examination about this robbery that took place in our house."

"That wasn't my fault," she replied; "I mostly happened to be out."

"Well, but do you know anything about it?"

"Not a thing—no more than yourself, Mr. Hycy."

Her interrogator turned upon her a hard scrutinizing glance, in which it was easy to see that she read a spirit of strong and dissatisfied suspicion. She was evidently conscious of this; for as Hycy stood gazing upon her, she reddened, and betrayed unequivocal symptons of confusion.

"Because, Nanny," he proceeded, "if you knew anything about it, and didn't mention it at once to the family, you would be considered as one of the robbers."

"An' wouldn't I be nearly as bad if I didn't?" she replied; "surely the first thing I'd do would be to tell."

"It's very strange," observed Hycy, "that such a robbery could be committed in a house where there are so many servants, without any clue whatsoever to a discovery."

"Well, I don't agree with you there, Mr. Hycy—if what your father and mother an' all o' them say is true—that it wasn't often the hall-door was bolted at night; and that they can't say whether it was fastened on *that* night or not. Sure if it wasn't, there was nothing to prevent any one from comin' in."

"Very true, Nanny," he replied, "very true; and we have paid severely for our negligence."

This closed the conversation, but Hycy felt that, proceed from whatever source it might, it was impossible to dismiss certain vague suspicions as connected with the mendicant's daughter. He determined, however, to watch her narrowly; and somehow he could not divest himself of the impression that she saw through his design. This incident occurred a few days after the robbery.

Jemmy Burke, though in many respects a man of easy and indolent character, was nevertheless a person who, as is familiarly said, "always keep an eye to the main chance." He was by no means over-tidy either in his dress or farming; but it mattered little in what light you contemplated him, you were always certain to find him a man not affected by trifles, nor rigidly systematic in anything; but at the same time you could not help observing that he was a man of strong points, whose life was marked by a course of high prosperity, that seemed to flow in upon him, as it were, by some peculiar run of good fortune. This luck, however, was little less than the natural result of shrewd mother-wit, happily applied to the ordinary transactions of life, and assuming the appearance of good fortune rather than of sound judgment, in consequence of the simplicity of character under which it acted.

Ever since the night of the robbery, he had devoted himself more to the pipe than he had ever been known to do before; he spoke little, too; but what he did say was ironical, though not by any means without a tinge of quiet but caustic humor.

Hycy, on entering the parlor, found him seated in an arm-chair, smoking as usual, whilst his mother, who soon came down stairs, appeared dressed in more than her usual finery.

"What keeps Patsy Dolan wid the car?" she inquired. "Hycy, do you see any appearance of him?"

"No, ma'am," replied the son; "I didn't know you wanted him."

Jemmy looked at her with a good deal of surprise, and, after whiffing away the smoke, asked—"And well, Rosha—begs pardon—Mrs. Burke—is it a fair question to ax where you are bound for?"

"Fair enough, Mr. Burke," she replied; "but I'm not goin' to answer it."

"You're bound for a journey, ma'am, I think?"

"I'm bound for a journey, sir."

"Is it a *long* journey, Mrs. Burke?"

"No, indeed; it's a short journey, Mister Burke."

"Ah!" replied her husband, uttering a very significant groan; "I'm afraid it is."

"Why do you groan, Mr. Burke?"

"Oh it doesn't signify," he replied, dryly; "it's no novelty, I believe, to hear a man—a married man—groan in this world; only if you wor for a *long* journey, I'd be glad to give you every assistance in my power."

"You hear *that*, Hycy; there's affection?" she exclaimed—"wishin' me to go my long journey!"

"Would you marry again, Mr. Burke?" asked the worthy son.

"I think not," replied Jemmy. "There's gintlemen enough o' the name—I'm afraid one too many."

"Well," exclaimed his wife, assuming something as near to her conception of the look of a martyr as possible, "*I'm* sufferin' at all events; but I know my crown's before me."

"Sich as it is," replied her husband, "I dare say it is."

"I'll not be back for a few hours, Hycy; an'—but here's the car. Come fardher up, Patsy."

Hycy politely handed his mother out, and assisted her on the car. "Of course, he'll discover it all," said he, laughing.

"I know he will," she replied; "but when it's over, it's over, and that's all."

Jemmy now met his son at the hall-door, and asked him if he knew where his mother had gone.

"I really cannot undertake to say," replied the other. "Mrs. Burke, father, is a competent judge of her own notions; but I presume to think that she may take a drive upon her own car, without being so severely, if not ungenerously catechised about it. I presume to think so, sir; but I daresay I am wrong, and that even *that* is a crime on my part."

His father made no reply, but proceeded at an easy and thoughtful pace to join his men in the field where they were at labor.

Hycy, after his mother's return that evening, seemed rather in low spirits, if one could form any correct estimate of his character by appearances. He was very silent, and somewhat less given to those broken snatches of melody than was his wont; and yet a close observer might have read in his deportment, and especially in the peculiar expression of his eye, that which seemed to indicate anything rather than depression or gloom. His silence, to such an observer, might have appeared rather the silence of satisfaction and triumph, than of disappointment or vexation.

His father, indeed, saw little of him that night, in consequence of the honest man having preferred the hob of his wealthy and spacious kitchen to the society of his wife and son in the parlor. The next morning, however, they met at breakfast, as usual, when Hycy, after some ironical compliments to his father's good taste, asked him, "if he would do him the favor to step towards the stable and see his purchase."

"You don't mane Crazy Jane?" said the other, coolly.

"I do," replied Hycy; "and as I set a high value on your opinion, perhaps you would be kind enough to say what you think of her."

Now, Hycy never for a moment dreamt that his father would have taken him at his word, and we need hardly say that he was a good deal disconcerted at the cool manner in which the other expressed his readiness to do so.

"Well, Mr. Burke," he proceeded, when they had reached the stable, "there she is. Pray what do you think of her?"

The old man looked at her from various points, passed his hand down her limbs, clapped her on the back, felt her in different places, then looked at her again. "She's a beauty" said he, "a born beauty like Billy Neelin's foal; what's this you say you paid for her?"

"Thirty-five pounds."

"Tare-an-ounty, Hycy, she's dog chape—thirty-five!—why she's value for double the sum."

"Nearly," replied Hycy, quite elevated and getting into good humor; "is she not really now, father, a precious bit of flesh?"

"Ah! you may swear that, Hycy; I tell you you won't act the honest man, if you don't give him fifteen or twenty pounds over an' above what you paid him. Tom Burton I see's too simple for you. Go and do what I bid you; don't defraud the poor man; you have got a treasure, I tell you—a beauty bright—an extraordinary baste—a wonderful animal—oh, dear me! what a great purchase! Good-bye, Hycy. Bless my sowl! what a judge of horseflesh you are!"

Having uttered these words in a tone of grave and caustic irony, he left his worthy son in a state of chagrin almost bordering on resentment, at the strong contempt for Crazy Jane, implied by the excessive eulogium he had passsed upon her. This feeling, however, was on reflection considerably checked by his satisfaction on finding that the matter was taken by his father so coolly. He had calculated on receiving a very stormy lecture from him the moment he should become aware of his having the animal in his possession; and he now felt rather relieved that he should have escaped so easily. Be this as it may, Hycy was now in excellent spirits. Not only had Crazy Jane been secured, but there were strong symptoms of his being in cash. In a few days after the incident of the stable, he contrived to see Philip Hogan, with whom he appointed a final meeting in Cavanagh's kiln on the night of the Kemp; at which meeting, Teddy Phats and the other two Hogans were also to be present, in order to determine upon the steps which he ultimately proposed to take, with a view to work out his purposes, whatever those purposes may have been.

CHAPTER VII.

The Spinster's Kemp.

A KEMP, or camp, is a contest of industrial skill, or a competition for priority in a display of rustic labor. Among men it is principally resorted to in planting potatoes or

reaping of corn, and generaly only on the day which closes the labor at each for the season; but in the sense in which it is most usually practised and contested, it means a trial of female skill at the spinning of linen yarn. It is, indeed, a very cheerful assemblage of the fair sex; and, although strong and desperate rivalry is the order of the day, yet it is conducted in a spirit so light-hearted and amicable that we scarcely know a more laudable or delightful recreation in country life. Its object is always good, and its associations praiseworthy, inasmuch as they promote industry, a spirit of becoming emulation, and principles of good will and kindness to our neighbor.

When a kemp is about to be held, the matter soon becomes generally known in the neighborhood. Sometimes the young women are asked, but in most instances, so eager are they to attend it that invitations are unnecessary. In the winter months, and in mountain districts, it is often as picturesque as it is pleasant. The young women usually begin to assemble about four o'clock in the morning; and, as they always go in groups, accompanied besides by their sweethearts or some male relatives, each of the latter bearing a large torch of well-dried bogfir, their voices, and songs, and loud laughter break upon the stillness of night with a holiday feeling, made ten times more delightful by the surrounding darkness and the hour. When they have not the torches the spinning-wheels are carried by the males, amidst an agreeable din of fun, banter, repartee, and jest, such as scarcely any other rustic amusement with which we are acquainted ever occasions. On arriving at the house where the kemp is to be held, they are placed in the barn or some clean outhouse; but indeed the numbers are usually such as to crowd every available place that can be procured for their accommodation. From the moment they arrive the lively din is incessant. Nothing is heard but laughter, conversation, songs, and anecdotes, all rising in a loud key, among the louder humming of the spinning-wheels and the stridulous noise of the reeds, as they incessantly crack the cuts in the hands of the reelers, who are perpetually turning them from morning to night, in order to ascertain the quantity which every competitor has spun; and she, of course, who has spun most wins the kemp, and is the queen for the night.

A kemp invariably closes with a dance—and a dance too upon an unusually extensive scale. Indeed, during the whole day the fair competitors are regaled from time to time with the enlivening strains of the fiddle or bagpipes, and very often with the united melody of both together.

On that morning the dwelling-house and mostly all the out-offices of Gerald Cavanagh bore, in stir and bustle, a stronger resemblance to the activity of so many bee-hives about to swarm than to anything else to which we can think of comparing them. Mirth in all its shapes, of laughter, glee, and song, rang out in every direction. The booming of wheels and the creaking of reels, the loud banter, the peals of laughter, the sweet Irish songs that filled up the pauses of the louder mirth, and the strains of the fiddle that ever and anon added to the enlivening spirit of the scene, all constituted such a full and general chorus of hilarity as could seldom be witnessed.

There were many girls present who took no part in the competition, but who, as friends and acquaintances of Kathleen and Hanna, came to enjoy the festive spirit of the day. Hanna herself, however, who had earned some celebrity as a spinster, started for the honor of winning, as did Dora M'Mahon, whose small and beautiful fingers seemed admirably adapted for this graceful and peculiarly feminine process of Minerva. Towards evening the neighbors assembled in considerable numbers, each interested in the success of some peculiar favorite, whose former feats had induced her friends to entertain on her behalf strong, if not certain, hopes of victory. Kathleen, from a principle of generosity, patronized her young friend, Dora M'Mahon; and Shibby M'Mahon, on the other hand, took Hanna Cavanagh under her protection. As the evening advanced, and the spectators and friends of the parties began to call, in order to be present at the moment of victory, it would be difficult to witness any assemblage of young women placed under circumstances of such striking interest. The mirth and song and general murmur diminished by degrees, until they altogether ceased, and nothing was to be heard but the perpetual cracking of the reels, the hum of the rapid wheels, and the voices of the reelers, as they proclaimed the state of this enlivening pool of industry. As for the fair competitors themselves, it might have been observed that even those among them who had no, or at least but slight pretensions to beauty, became actually interesting from the excitement which prevailed. Their eyes lit by the active spirit of rivalry within them, sparkled with peculiar brilliancy, their cheeks became flushed or got pale as they felt themselves elevated or depressed by the prospect or loss of victory. Nor were there wanting on this occasion some vivid glances that were burthened, as they passed aslant,

their fair faces, with pithier feelings than those that originated from a simple desire of victory. If truth must be told, baleful flashes, unmeasured both in number and expression, were exchanged in a spirit of true defiance between the interested and contending parties, as the close of the contest approached. At length, by the proclamation of the reelers, the great body of the competitors were thrown out, and they consequently gave up the contest. It was now six o'clock, and the first sound of seven o'clock by Captain Millar's bell was to close the proceedings, and enable the reelers to proclaim the victor. Only four names now remained to battle it out to the last; to wit, a country farmer's daughter, named Betty Aikins, Dora M'Mahon, Hanna Cavanagh, and a servant-girl belonging to another neighbor, named Peggy Bailly. This ruck, as they say on the turf, was pretty well up together, but all the rest nowhere. And now, to continue the metaphor, as is the case at Goodwood or the Curragh, the whole interest was centered upon these four. At the commencement of the last hour the state of the case was proclaimed as follows: Betty Aikins, three dozen and eight cuts; Dora M'Mahon, three dozen and seven cuts; Hanna Cavanagh, three dozen and five cuts; and Peggy Bailly, three dozen and four cuts. Every individual had now her own party anxious for her success, and amidst this hour of interest how many hearts beat with all hopes and fears that are incident even to the most circumscribed contest of human life. Opposite Dora stood the youth whom we have already noticed, James Cavanagh, whose salvation seemed but a very trifling thing when compared or put into opposition with her success. Be this as it may, the moment was a most exciting one even to those who felt no other interest than that which naturally arises from human competition. And it was unquestionably a beautiful thing to witness this particular contest between four youthful and industrious young women. Dora's otherwise pale and placid features were now mantling, and her beautiful dark eyes flashing, under the proud and ardent spirit of ambition, for such in fact was the principle which now urged and animated the contest. When nearly half an hour had passed, Kathleen came behind her, and stooping down, whispered, "Dora, don't turn your wheel *so* quickly: you move the foot-board too fast—don't twist the thread too much, and you'll let down more."

Dora smiled and looked up to her with a grateful and flashing eye. "Thank you, Kathleen," she replied, nodding, "I'll take your advice." The state of the contest was then proclaimed:—Betty Aikins—three dozen and ten cuts; Dora M'Mahon—three dozen and ten cuts; Hanna Cavanagh—three dozen, six cuts and a half; Peggy Bailly—three dozen, five and a half.

On hearing this, Betty Aikin's cheek became scarlet, and as it is useless to disguise the fact, several flashing glances that partook more of a Penthesilean fire than the fearful spirit which usually characterizes the industrious pursuits of Minerva, were shot at generous Dora, who sustained her portion of the contest with singular spirit and temper.

"You may as well give it up, Dora M'Mahon," exclaimed Betty; "there never was one of your blood could open against an Aikins—the stuff is not in you to beat me."

"A very little time will soon tell that," replied Dora; "but indeed, Betty, if I am doin' my best to win the kemp, I hope it's not in a bad or unfriendly spirit, but in one of fair play and good humor."

The contest now went on for about fifteen minutes, with surpassing interest and animation, at the expiration of which period, the seven o'clock bell already alluded to, rang the hour for closing their labors and determining the victory. Thus stood their relative position—Dora M'Mahon, four hanks and three cuts; Betty Aikins, four hanks; Hanna Cavanagh, three hanks and nine cuts; Peggy Bailly, three hanks and eight cuts.

When this result was made known, Betty Aikins burst into a loud fit of grief, in which she sobbed as if her very heart would break, and Kathleen stooping down, congratulated the beautiful girl upon her victory, kissing her at the same time as she spoke—an act of love and kindness in which she would have joyfully been followed by several of her male friends, if they had dared to take that delicious liberty.

The moment of victory, we believe, is that which may be relied upon as the test of true greatness. Dora M'Mahon felt the pride of that moment in its fullest extent, but she felt it only to influence her better and nobler principles. After casting her eyes around to gather in, as it were, that honest approbation which is so natural, and exchanging some rapid glances with the youth we have alluded to, she went over to her defeated competitor, and taking her hand said, "Don't cry, Betty, you have no right to be ashamed; sure, as you say, it's the first time you wor ever beaten; we couldn't all win; an' indeed if I feel proud now, everyone knows an' says I have a right to be so; for where was there—ay, or where is there—such a spinner as you are?

Shake hands now an' there's a kiss for you. If I won this kemp, it was won more by chance than by anything else."

These generous expressions were not lost on Betty; on the contrary, they soothed her so much that she gave her hand cordially to her young and interesting conqueress, after which they all repaired to a supper of new milk and flummery, than which there is nothing more delicious within the wide range of luxury. This agreeable meal being over, they repaired to the large barn where Mickey M'Grory, the fiddler, was installed in his own peculiar orchestra, consisting of an arm-chair of old Irish oak, brought out from Gerald Cavanagh's parlor.

It would indeed be difficult to find together such a group of happy faces. Gerald Cavanagh and his wife, Tom M'Mahon and his better half, and several of the neighbors, of every age and creed, were all assembled; and, in this instance, neither gray hairs nor length of years were looked upon as privileged from a participation in the festivities of the evening. Among the rest, gaunt and grim, were the three Hogans, looking through the light-hearted assemblage with the dark and sinister visages of thorough ruffians, who were altogether incapable of joining in the cheerful and inoffensive amusements that went forward around them. Kate Hogan sat in an obscure corner behind the fiddler, where she was scarcely visible, but from which she enjoyed a full view of everything that occurred in the house.

A shebeen-man, named Parra Bradagh, father to Barney, whom the reader has already met in the still-house, brought a cask of poteen to the stable, where he disposed of it *sub silentio*, by which we mean without the knowledge of Gerald Cavanagh, who would not have suffered any such person about his place, had the circumstance been made known to him. Among the rest, in the course of the evening, our friend O'Finigan the Philomath made his appearance, and as was his wont very considerably advanced in liquor. The worthy pedagogue, on inquiring for the queen of the kemp, as he styled her, was told that he might know her by the flowers in her hair. "There she is, masther," said one of them, "wid the roses on her head."

"Well," said O'Finigan, looking about him with surprise, "I have, before now, indulged in the Cerelian juice until my eyes have become possessed of that equivocal quality called *the double vision*, but I must confess that this is the first occasion on which the quality aforesaid has been quadrupled. Instead of one queen, wid Flora's fragrant favors in her lock, I think I see four."

Finigan indeed was right. Dora, on being presented with a simple chaplet of flowers, as the heroine of the night, in a spirit of true magnanimity generously divided the chaplet among her three rivals, thus, like every brave heart, resting satisfied with the consciousness of victory, and anxious that those who had approached her so nearly should also share in its honors.

It is not our intention to enter into a detailed account of the dancing, nor of the good humor which prevailed among them. It is enough to say that the old people performed minuets and cotillions, and the young folks, jigs, reels, and country dances; hornpipes were performed upon doors, by rural dancers, and all the usual variations of mirth and amusement were indulged in on the occasion.

We have said that Tom M'Mahon and his family were there, but we should have added, with one exception. Bryan did not arrive until the evening was far advanced, having been prevented by pressing business connected with his farm. On making his appearance, he was greeted by a murmur of welcomes, and many an honest hand was extended to him. Up until then there were two individuals who observed Kathleen Cavanagh closely, and we must ourselves admit that both came to the same conclusion. It was clear that during the whole evening she had been unusually pensive, if not actually depressed, although a general observer would have seen nothing in her beyond the natural sedateness of her manner. The two in question were Kate Hogan and Dora M'Mahon. On Bryan's arrival, however, the color of her cheek deeped into a richer beauty, the eye became more sparkling, and a much slighter jest than before moved her into mirth. Such, however, we are, and such is the mystery of our nature. It might have been remarked that the Hogans eyed Bryan, soon after making his appearance, with glances expressive of anything but good feeling. It was not, however, when he first arrived, or danced with Hanna Cavanagh, that these boding glances were turned upon him, but on the occasion of his performing a reel with Kathleen. It might have been noticed that they looked at him, and afterwards at each other, in a manner that could admit of but little misapprehension.

"Philip," observed Finigan, addressing the elder Hogan, "Philip, the Macedonian—monarch of Macedon, I say, is not that performance a beautiful specimen of the saltatory art? There is manly beauty, O Philip! and modest carriage.

"'With aquil beauty formed, and aquil grace,
Hers the soft blushes of the opening morn,
And his the radiance of the risen day.'"

"It's night now, masther, if you plaise," returned Hogan, gruffly; "but we don't want your opinion here—stick to your pot-hooks and hangers—keep to your trade."

"The *pot-hooks* and *hangers* are more *tui generis*, you misbegotten satyr," replied the schoolmaster; "that is, more appropriately concatenated with your own trade than wid mine. I have no trade, sirra, but a profession, and neither have you. You stand in the same degraded ratio to a tradesman that a rascally quack does to a regular surgeon."

"You had better keep a civil tongue in your head," replied Hogan, nettled at the laughter which the schoolmaster raised at his expense.

"What! a civil tongue for you! Polite language for a rascally sotherer of ould skillets and other anonymous utensils. Why, what *are* you?—firstly, a general violation of the ten commandments; and, secondly, a mis-shapen but faithful impersonation of the seven deadly sins. Take my word for it, my worthy Macedonian, you will die any death but a horizontal one—it's veracity I'm telling you. Yet there is some comfort for you too—some comfort, I say again; for you who never lived one upright hour will die an upright death. A certain official will erect a perpendicular with you; but for that touch of Mathematics you must go to the hangman, at whose hands you will have to receive the rites of your church, you monstrous bog-trotting Gorgon. Mine a trade! Shades of Academus, am I to bear this!"

Finigan was, like most of his class, a privileged man; but on this occasion the loudness of the mirth prevented Hogan's reply from being heard. As to violence, nobody that knew the poor pedagogue could ever dream of using it towards him, and there is little doubt that the consciousness of this caused him to give his tongue a license when provoked, which he otherwise would not have dared to venture upon. When he first made his appearance he was so far advanced in liquor as scarcely to be able to stand, and it was quite evident that the heat of the crowded house by no means improved him.

In about a quarter of an hour after Bryan and Kathleen had danced, the good people of the kemp were honored by the appearance of Hycy Burke among them—not in his jockey dress, but in a tight-fitting suit, that set off his exceedingly well-made person to great advantage. In fact, Hycy was a young fellow of a remarkably handsome face, full of liveliness and apparent good humor, and a figure that was nearly perfect. He addressed the persons present with an air of easy condescension, and went over immediately and shook hands, in a very cordial manner, with Gerald Cavanagh and his wife, after which he turned round and bowed to the daughters. He then addressed Bryan, beside whom Kathleen was sitting.

"Bryan," said he, "there will be mistakes in the best of families. I hate enmity. How do you do?"

Bryan nodded, and replied, "Pretty well, Hycy—how are you?"

Cavanagh and his wife were evidently quite delighted to see him; the good man rose and made him take his own seat, and Mrs. Cavanagh paid him every conceivable mark of attention.

"Mrs. Cavanagh," said he, after some chat, "may I be permitted to indulge in the felicity of a dance with Miss Cavanagh?"

"Which of them?" asked the mother, and then added, without waiting for a reply—"to be sure you may."

"The felicity of a dance! that was well expressed, Mr. Hycy; but it was not for nothing that you broke grammatical ground under Patricius Finigan—ah, no; the early indoctrinations will tell;—that is clear."

"I mean Miss Kathleen," replied Hycy, without paying any attention to Finigan's observations.

"Why not?" exclaimed both; "of course you will—go over and bring her out."

Hycy, approaching her, said, in his blandest and most persuasive manner, "Miss Cavanagh, will you allow me the gratification of dancing a reel with you?"

"I'm obliged to you, Mr. Burke," she replied gravely; "I have just danced a reel with Bryan M'Mahon here, and I don't intend to dance any more to-night."

"A simple reel?" said Hycy; "perhaps you will so far favor me? I shall consider it as a favor, I assure you."

"Excuse me, Mr. Burke, but I won't dance any more to-night."

"That's hard," he replied, "especially as I came all the way to have that pleasure. Perhaps you will change your mind, Miss Cavanagh?"

"I'm not in the habit of changing my mind, Mr. Burke," she replied, "and I don't see any reason why I should do so now. I say once for all that I won't dance any more to-night."

"What is it," asked the mother, on perceiving her hesitation; "won't she dance wid you? Hut, tut, Kathleen, what nonsense is this? To be sure you must dance wid Mr. Burke; don't take any refusal, Mr. Burke—is that all you know about girls?—sure nineteen refusals is aquil to one consent. Go over, Gerald, and make her dance wid him," she added, turning to her husband.

"What's the matter, Kathleen, that you won't dance wid Mr. Hycy?" asked the good man.

"Because I have danced all I will dance to-night, father."

"Tut, nonsense, you foolish girl—it's proud you ought to be that he'd ax you. Get up and dance a reel wid him."

Hanna, who knew her sister's resolution when once formed, immediately came to her rescue. "Don't ask her, father," she said; "the truth is, that I believe she has a headache—however, I'll take her place—have you any objection to me, Mr. Burke?"

None in the world—he would be very happy—only he regretted that he could not have that pleasure also with his sister.

"Ah, Mr. Hycy—which is properly Hyacinthus," said Finigan; "I am able to perceive that Cupid declines to be propitious in that quarter, or perhaps it's the *iræ amantium* —which is, on being rendered into vernacularity, a falling out of lovers; and if so, do not despair; for as certain as it is, it will be followed by that most delectable of processes, the *redintegratio amoris*, or the renewing of love. In fact, he is a little better than a tyro—an *ignoramus*, who doesn't quarrel at least once a week, wid the fair object of his amorous inclinations, an' that for the sake of the reconciliaitons."

Hycy and Hanna were now about to dance, when Philip Hogan came forward, and, with an oath, declared that Kathleen must dance —"He wouldn't see Mr. Burke insulted that way by any such airs—and by——she must dance. Come," said he, "what stuff is this —we'll see whether you or I is strongest;" and as he spoke he seized her rudely by the arm, and was about to pull her out on the floor.

Bryan M'Mahon sprung to his feet. "Let her go, you ruffian," he exclaimed; "let her go this instant."

"No, I won't," replied the savage; "an' not for you, at any rate. Come, Miss Kathleen, out you'll go:—for you indeed," he added, in a ferocious parenthesis, looking at Bryan; "it's you that's the cause of all this. Come, miss, dance you must."

The words were scarcely uttered when M'Mahon, by a single blow on the neck, felled him like an ox, and in an instant the whole place was a scene of wild commotion. The Hogans, however, at all times unpopular, had no chance in an open affray on such an occasion as this. The feeling that predominated was, that the ruffianly interference of Philip had been justly punished; and ere many minutes the usual harmony, with the exception of some threatening looks and ferocious under growls from the Hogans, was restored. Hycy and Hanna then went on with their dance, and when it was over, the schoolmaster rose to depart.

"Mr. Burke," said he, "you are and have the reputation of being a perfect gentleman *homo factus ad unguem*—as has been said by the learned little Roman, who, between you and me, was not overburthened with an excess of morality. I take the liberty, jinteels, of wishing you a good-night—*precor vobis prosperam noctem!* Ah, I can do it yet; but it wasn't for nothing that I practised the peripatetics in larned Kerry, where the great O'Finigan is not yet forgotten. I shall now seek a contiguous place of repose, until the consequences of some slight bacchanalin libations on my part shall have dispersed themselves into thin air."

He accordingly departed, but from the unsteadiness of his step it was clear that, as he said, the place of his repose must be contiguous indeed. Had he been conscious of his own motions it is not likely he would have sought for repose in Cavanagh's kiln, then the habitation of the Hogans. It was probably the fact of the door having been left open, which was generally the case in summer, that induced him to enter—for enter he did—ignorant, it is to be presumed, that the dwelling he was about to enter was then inhabited by the Hogans, whom he very much disrelished.

The place was nearly waste, and had a very desolate look. Scattered around, and littered upon shake-down beds of straw, some half dozen young besmutted savages, male and female, lay stretched in all positions, some north, others south, without order or decency, but all seemingin that barbarous luxury which denotes strong animal health and an utter disregard of cleanliness and bodily comfort.

Over in one of the corners lay three or four budgets, old iron skillets, hammers, lumps of melted lead, broken pots, a quantity of cows' horns for spoons, wooden dishes that required clasping, old kettles that wanted repair, a couple of cast off Poteen Stills, and a new one half made—all of which were visible by the light of a large log of bog-fir which lay burning in the fire-place. On looking around him, he descended a flight of stone steps that led to the fireplace or the kiln or opening in which the fuel used to dry the grain was always burned. This corner, which was eight or ten feet below the other portion of the floor, being, in general, during the summer months filled with straw, received the drowsy pedagogue, who, in a few minutes, was as sound asleep as any of them about him.

Hycy, who was conscious of his good figure, danced two or three times afterwards.

Dora M'Mahon had the honor of being his partner, as had one or two of the best looking girls present. At the close of the last dance he looked significantly at the Hogans, and nodded towards the door; after which it might have been observed, that they slunk out one at a time, followed in a few minutes by Kate. Hycy, after some further chat with Gerald Cavanagh and his wife, threw half a crown to Mickey M'Grory, and in his usual courteous phraselogy, through which there always ran, by the way, a vein of strong irony, he politely wished them all a good night.

CHAPTER VIII.

Anonymous Letter with a Name to It—Finigan's Dialogue with Hycy.

The severest tax upon Hycy's powers of invention was, in consequence of his habits of idleness, to find means of occupying his time. Sometimes, it is true, he condescended to oversee the men while at work, but then it was generally found that so far from keeping them to their employment, he was a considerable drawback upon their industry. The ordinary business of his life, however, was riding about the country, and especially into the town of Ballymacan and home again. He was also a regular attendant in all the neighboring fairs; and we may safely assert that no race in the province ever came off without him.

On the second day after his interview with Teddy Phats and the Hogans, he was riding past the post-office, when he heard the window tapped, and, on approaching, a letter was handed out to him, which on opening he found to contain the following communication:—

"Worthy Mr. Hyacinthus—

"A friend unknown to you, but not altogether so to fame, and one whom no display of the subtlest ingenuity on behalf of your acute and sagacious intellect could ever decypher through the medium of this epistle, begs to convey to you a valuable portion of anonymous information. When he says that he is not unknown to fame, the assertion, as far as it goes, is pregnant wid veracity. Mark that I say, as far as it goes, by which is meant the assertion as well as the fame of your friend, the inditer of this significant epistle. Forty-eight square miles of good sound fame your not inerudite correspondent can conscientiously lay claim to; and although there is, with regret I admit it, a considerable portion of the square superficies alluded to, waste and uncultivated moor, yet I can say, wid that racy touch of genial and expressive pride which distinguishes men of letters in general, that the other portions of this fine district are inhabited by a multitudinity of population in the highest degree creditable to the prolific powers of the climate. 'Tisn't all as one, then, as that thistle-browsing quadruped. Barney Heffernan, who presumes, in imitation of his betters, to write Philomath after his name, and whose whole extent of literary reputation is not more than two or three beggarly townlands, whom, by the way, he is inoculating successfully wid his own ripe and flourishing ignorance. No, sir; nor like Gusty Gibberish, or (as he has been most facetiously christened by his Reverence, Father O'Flaherty) Demosthenes M'Gosther, inasmuch as he his distinguished for an aisy and prodigal superfluity of mere words, unsustained by intelligibility or meaning, but who cannot claim in his own person a mile and a half of dacent reputation. However, *quid multis?* Mr. Hyacinthus; 'tis no indoctrinated or obscure scribe who now addresses you, and who does so from causes that may be salutary to your own health and very gentlemanly fame, according as you resave the same, not pretermitting interests involving, probably, on your part, an abundant portion of pecuniarity.

"In short, then, it has reached these ears, Mr. Hyacinthus, and between you and me, they are not such a pair as, in consequence of their longitudinity, can be copiously shaken, or which rise and fall according to the will of the wearer; like those of the thistle-browser already alluded to; it has reached them that you are about to substantiate a a disreputable—excuse the phrase—co-partnership wid four of the most ornamental villains on Hibernian earth, by which you must understand me to mane that the villains aforesaid are not merely accomplished in all the plain principles and practices of villainy, but finished off even to its natest and most inganious decorations. Their whole life has been most assiduously and successfully devoted to a general violation of the ten commandments, as well as to the perpetual commission of the seven deadly sins. Nay, the "*reserved cases*" themselves can't escape them, and it is well known that they won't rest satisfied wid the wide catalogue of ordinary and general iniquity, but they must, by way of luxury, have a lick at blasphemy, and some of the rarer vices, as often as they can, for the villains are so fastidious that they won't put up wid common wickedness like other people. I cannot, however, wid anything approximating to a safe conscience,

rest here. What I have said has reference to the laws of God, but what I am about to enumerate relates to the laws of man—to the laws of the land Wid respect, then, to them, I do assure you, that although I myself look upon the violation of a great number of the latter wid a very vanial squint, still, I say, I do assure you that they have not left a single law made by Parliament unfractured. They have gone over the whole statute-book several times, and I believe are absolutely of opinion that the Parliament is doing nothing. The most lynx-eyed investigator of old enactments could not find one which has escaped them, for the villains are perfectly black letter in that respect; and what is in proper keeping wid this, whenever they hear of a new Act of Parliament they cannot rest either night or day until they break it. And now for the inference: be on your guard against this pandemonial squad. Whatever your object may be in cultivating and keeping society wid them, theirs is to ruin you—fleece was the word used—and then to cut and run, leaving Mr. Hycy—the acute, the pēnetrating, the accomplished—completely in the lurch. Be influenced, then, by the amicitial admonitions of the inditer of this correspondence. Become not a smuggler—forswear poteen. The Lord forgive me, Mr. Hycy—no, I only wished to say forswear—not the poteen—but any connection wid the illegal alembic from which it is distillated, otherwise they will walk off wid the 'doublings,' or strong liquor, leaving you nothing but the *residuum* or feints. Take a friend's advice, therefore, and retrograde out of all society and connection wid the villains I have described; or if you superciliously overlook this warning, book it down as a fact that admits of no negation, that you will be denuded of reputation, of honesty, and of any pecuniary contingencies that you may happen to possess. This is a sincere advice from

"Your Anonymous Friend,
"PATRICIUS O'FINIGAN, Philomath."

After perusing this characteristic production, Hycy paused for a little, and felt it very probable that there might be some reasonable grounds for its production, although he could scarcely understand upon what motive these fellows should proceed to practice treachery towards him. That they were without principle or honesty he was perfectly satisfied; but he knew it was their interest to keep within bounds in all matters connected with their employment, He laughed very heartily at Finigan's blunder—for such it evidently was—in signing his name to a document that he intended to be anonymous.

"At all events," thought he, "I will ride over to his 'seminary,' as he calls it, and see what he can mean, or what his object is in sending me such a warning."

He accordingly did so, and in some twenty minutes reached a small cabin that stood about a couple of hundred yards from the high-road. A little bridle way led to it, as did several minor pathways, each radiating from a different direction. It was surrounded by four or five acres of common, where the children played from twelve to one, at which hour Mr. O'Finigan went to the house of some wealthy benefactor to dine. The little village of Ballydruthy, at a short distance from which it stood, was composed of a couple dozen dwelling-houses, a chapel, a small grocer's and publican's, together with a Pound at the entrance, through which ran a little stream necessary to enable the imprisoned cattle to drink.

On riding up to the school, Hycy, as he approached the door, heard his own name repeated by at least two dozen voices.

"Here's a gintleman, masther"—"It's Misther Hycy Burke, sir"—"It is, bedad, sir, Hycy the sportheen—"

"Him that rides the race, masther"—"Ay, an' he has on top-boots and buckskins, an's as gran' as a gintleman—"

"Silence!" said Finigan, "silence! I say; is this proper scholastic decorum in the presence of a stranger? Industry and taciturnity, you reptiles, or castigation shall result. Here, Paddy Sparable," he added, rising up—"here, you nailroad, assume my office, and rule the establishment till I return; and, mark me, as the son of a nailer, sirra, I expect that you will rule them with a rod of iron—ha! ha! ha!"

"Ay, but Paddy Pancake's here to-day, sir, an' he's able to welt me; so that's it's only leathered I'd get, sir, i' you plase."

"But have you no officers? Call in aid, I ordher you. Can't you make Sam Scaddhan and Phiddher Mackleswig there two *polis*, an' get Pancake down—flatten him—if he prove contumacious during my absence. Pancake, mark me, obedience is your cue, or, if not, the castigator here is your alternative; there it is, freshly cut—ripe and ready—and you are not to be told, at this time o' day, what portion of your *corpus* will catch it. Whish-h-h!—silence! I say. How do you do, Mr. Burke? I am proud of a visit from you, sir; perhaps you would light down and examine a class. My Greeks are all absent to-day; but I have a beautiful class o' Romans in the Fourth Book of Virgil—immortal Maro. Do try them, Mr. Hycy; if they don't do Dido's death in a truly congenial spirit I am no classic. Of one thing I can

assure you, that they ought; for I pledge my reputation it is not the first time I've made them practice the Irish cry over it. This, however, was but natural; for it is now well known to the learned that, if Dido herself was not a fair Hibernian, she at least spoke excellent Irish. Ah, Mr. Hycy," he added, with a grin, "the birch is the only pathetic switch growing! Will you come in, sir?"

"No, thank you, Mr. Finigan; but perhaps you would have the goodness to come out for a little;" and, as he spoke, he nodded towards the public-house. "I know the boys will be quiet until you return."

"If they don't," replied Finigan, "the alternative is in no shape enigmatical. Mark what I've already said, gintlemen. Sparable, do you keep a faithful journal of the delinquents; and observe that there are offices of importance in this world besides flagellating erudition into reptiles like you."

He then looked about him with an air of vast importance, and joined Hycy on his way to the public-house. Having ordered in the worthy pedagogue's favorite beverage, not forgetting something of the same kind for himself, he addressed Finigan as follows:—

"Finigan, I received a devilish queer letter from you to-day—take your liquor in the mean time—what did you mean by it?"

"From me, Mr. Hycy—*nego*, I say—*pugnis et calc bu nego*."

"Come, come, you know you wrote me an anonymous letter, referring to some ridiculous copartnership or other that I can neither make head nor tail of. Tell me candidly what you meant."

"Very good, Mr. Burke; but sure I know of old that jocularity was always your *forte*—even when laying in under my own instruction that sound classical substratum on which the superstructure of your subsequent knowledge was erected, you were always addicted to the facetious and the fabulous—both of which you contrived to blend together with an ease and volubility of language that could not be surpassed."

"That is all very well; but you need not deny that you wrote me the letter. Let me ask you seriously, what was it you warned me against?"

"*Propino tibi salutem*—here's to you. No, but let me ask you what you are at, Mr. Hycy? You may have resaved an anonymous letter, but I am ignorant why you should paternize it upon me."

"Why, because it has all the marks and tokens of you."

"Eh?—to what does that amount? Surely you know my handwriting?"

"Perfectly; but this is disguised evidently."

"Faith," said the other, laughing, "maybe the inditer of it was disguised when he wrote it."

"It might be," replied Hycy; "however, take your liquor, and in the mean time I shall feel exceedingly obliged to you, Mr. Finigan, if you will tell me the truth at once—whether you wrote it or whether you did not?"

"My response again is in the negative," replied Finigan—"I disclaim it altogether. I am not the scribe, you may rest assured of it, nor can I say who is."

"Well, then," said Hycy, "I find I must convict you yourself of the fabulous at least; read that," said he, placing the letter in his own hands. "Like a true Irishman you signed your name unconsciously; and now what have you to say for yourself?"

"Simply," replied the other, "that some knave, of most fictitious imagination, has forged my name to it. No man can say that that is my manuscription, Mr. Hycy." These words he uttered with great coolness; and Hycy, who was in many things a shrewd young fellow, deemed it better to wait until the liquor, which was fast disappearing, should begin to operate. At length, when about three-quarters of an hour had passed, he resolved to attack his vanity.

"Well, well, Finigan, as regards this letter, I must say I feel a good deal disappointed."

"Why so, Mr. Hycy?"

"Why, because I did not think there was any other man in the country who *could* have written it."

"Eh? how is that now?"

"Faith, it's very simple; the letter is written with surprising ability—the language is beautiful—and the style, like the land of Canaan, flowing with milk and honey. It is certainly a most uncommon production."

"Now, seriously, do you think so? At all events, Mr. Hycy, it was written by a friend of yours—that's a clear case."

"I think so; but what strikes me is its surprising ability; no wonder the writer should say that he is not unknown to fame—he could not possibly remain in obscurity."

"Mr. Hycy, your health—I remember when you were wid me you certainly were *facile princeps* for a ripe judgment, even in your rudiments; so then, you are of opinion that the epistle in question has janius? I think myself it is no everyday production; not I believe such as the thistle-browser Heffernan, or Misther Demosthenes M'Gosther could achieve—the one wid his mile and a half, and the other wid his three townlands of reputation. No, sir, to the divil I pitch them both; they could never indite such a document. Your health, Mr. Hycy—*propino*

tibi, I say; and you *are* right, *ille ego*—it's a a fact; I am the man, sir—I acknowledge the charge."

This admission having been made, we need scarcely add that an explanation was at at once given by Finigan of the motive which had induced him to write the letter.

"On laving the kemp," said he, "and getting into the open air—*sub diu*, Mr. Hycy—I felt a general liquidation of my whole bodily strength, with a strong disposition to make short excursions to the right or to the left rather than hold my way straight a-head, with, I must confess, an equal tendency to deposit my body on my mother earth and enact the soporiferous. On passing Gerald Cavanagh's kiln, where the Hogans kennel, I entered, and was greeted wid such a chorus of sternutation as you might expect from a pig-sty in midsummer, and made me envy the unlicked young savages who indulged in it. At the period spoken of neither you nor they had come in from the kemp. Even this is but a dim recollection, and I remember nothing more until I overheard your voice and theirs in dialogue as you were about to depart. After you went, I heard the dialogue which I hinted at in the letter, between Teddy Phats and them; and knowing my position and the misbegotten satyrs by whom I was surrounded, I patiently waited until they were asleep, when I quietly took my departure."

Burke could not help inferring from Finigan's manner, that he had overheard a greater portion of their conversation on the occasion alluded to than he seemed disposed to acknowledge.

"Now, Finigan," he said, "I feel disposed to place every confidence in you. Will you answer candidly the question I am about to propose to you? Did you hear Bryan M'Mahon's name mentioned?"

"You say, Mr. Hycy," replied Finigan, emptying his glass, "that you would enthertain no apprehension in placing confidence in me?"

"Not the slightest," replied Hycy; "I believe you to be the very soul of honor; and, besides, are you not my old master? As you say yourself, did I not break grammatical ground under you?"

"The soul of honor," replied the pedagogue, complacently—"that is excellently said. Well, then, Mr. Burke, I shall not deal out my confidence by beggarly instalments—I did hear Bryan M'Mahon's name mentioned; and I heard a plan alluded to between you and them for reducing him to —"

"That was all humbug, Finigan, so far as I am concerned; but for the present I am obliged to let them suppose what you allude to, in order to keep them honest to myself if I can. You know they have a kind of hereditary hatred against the M'Mahons; and if I did not allow them to take their own way in this, I don't think I could depend on them."

"Well, there is raison in that too," replied Finigan.

"I am sure, Finigan," proceeded Hycy, "that you are too honorable a man to breathe either to Bryan M'Mahon or any one else, a single syllable of the conversation which you overheard merely by accident. I say I am certain you will never let it transpire, either by word of mouth or writing. In me you may always calculate on finding a sincere friend; and of this let me assure you, that your drink, if everything goes right with us, won't cost you much—much! not a penny; if you had two throats instead of one—as many necks as Hydra, we should supply them all."

"Give me your hand, Mr. Hycy—you are a gintleman, and I always said would be one—I did, sir—I prognosticated as much years ago; and sincerely felicitous am I that my prognostications have been verified for so far. I said you would rise—that exaltation was before you—and that your friends might not feel at all surprised at the elevated position in which you will die. *Propino tibi*, again—and do not fear that ever revelation of mine shall facilitate any catastrophe that may await you."

Hycy looked keenly into the schoolmaster's face as he uttered the last observation; but in the maudlin and collapsed features then before him he could read nothing that intimated the sagacity of a double meaning. This satisfied him; and after once more exacting from Finigan a pledge of what he termed honorable confidence, he took his departure.

CHAPTER IX.

A Little Politics, Much Friendship, and Some Mystery.

THIS communication determined Hycy to forego his intention for the present, and he consequently allowed the summer and autumn to pass without keeping up much intercourse with either Teddy Phats or the Hogans. The truth is, that Burke, although apparently frank and candid, was constitutionally cautious, and inclined a good deal to suspicion. He feared that no project, the knowledge of which was held in common with Finigan, could be long kept a secret;

and for this reason he make up his mind to postpone the matter, and allow it to die away out of the schoolmaster's mind ere he bestowed any further attention upon it. In the meantime, the state of the country was gradually assuming a worse and more depressing character. The season was unfavorable; and although we do not assert that many died of immediate famine, yet we know that hundreds—nay, thousands—died from the consequences of scarcity and destitution—or, in plainer words, from fever and other diseases induced by bad and insufficient food, and an absence of the necessary comforts of life. Indeed, at the period of our narrative, the position of Ireland was very gloomy; but when, we may ask, has it been otherwise, within the memory of man, or the records of history? Placed as the country was, emigration went forward on an extensive scale,—emigration, too, of that peculiar description which every day enfeebles and impoverishes the country, by depriving her of all that approaches to anything like a comfortable and independent yeomanry. This, indeed, is a kind of depletion which no country can bear long; and, as it is, at the moment we are writing this, progressing at a rate beyond all precedent, it will not, we trust, be altogether uninteresting to inquire into some of the causes that have occasioned it. Let not our readers apprehend, however, that we are about to turn our fictitious narrative into a dissertation on political economy.

Of course the principle cause of emigration is the poverty and depressed state of the country; and it follows naturally, that whatever occasions our poverty will necessarily occasion emigration. The first cause of our poverty then, is Absenteeism, which, by drawing six or seven millions out of the country, deprives our people of employment and means of life to that amount. The next is the general inattention of Irish landlords to the state and condition of their own property, and an inexcusable want of sympathy with their tenantry, which, indeed, is only a corollary from the former; for it can hardly be expected that those who wilfully neglect themselves will feel a warm interest in others. The next is the evil of subletting, by which property becomes overloaded with human beings, who, for the most part, are bound by no ties whatsoever to the owner of the soil. He is not their landlord, nor are they his tenants; and so far from their interests being in any way reciprocal, they are actually adversative. It is *his* interest to have them removed, and, as circumstances unfortunately stand, it is *theirs* to remain, inasmuch as their alternative is ruin since they have no place of shelter to receive them.

Political corruption, in the shape of the forty-shilling franchise, was another cause, and one of the very worst, which led to the prostration of the country by poverty and moral degradation, and for this the proprietors of the soil are solely responsible. Nor can the use of the potato, as the staple food of the laboring classes, in connection with the truck system, and the consequent absence of money payments, in addition to the necessary ignorance of domestic and social comforts that resulted from them, be left out of this wretched catalogue of our grievances. Another cause of emigration is to be found in the high and exorbitant rents at which land is held by all classes of farmers—with some exceptions we admit, as in the case of old leases—but especially by those who hold under middlemen, or on the principle of subletting generally. By this system a vast deal of distress and petty but most harrassing oppression is every day in active operation upon the property of the head landlord, which he can never know, and for which he is in no other way responsible unless by having ever permitted the existence of it for any purpose whatsoever.

In a country distracted like Ireland, it would be impossible to omit the existence of political and religious animosity as a strong and prominent cause of our wretched poverty, and consequently of emigration. The priest, instead of leaving temporal affairs to temporal men, most improperly mingles himself in the angry turmoils of politics, to which, by his interference, he communicates a peculiar and characteristic bitterness. The landlord, on the other hand, having his own interests to consult, does not wish to arm a political opponent with such powers as he knows will most assuredly be turned against himself, and consequently often refuses to grant a lease unless to those who will pledge themselves to support him. This state of things, involving, as it does, much that is wrong on both sides, is, has been, and will be, a present and permanent curse to the country—a curse, too, which, until there is more of humanity and justice on the one side, and of education and liberal feeling on the other, is not likely to disappear from the country.

Though last, not least, comes the unaccountable and guilty neglect of our legislature (if we can call it *ours*) in everything that pertained to Irish interests. This, together with its almost necessary consequence of dishonest agitation on the one hand, and well founded dissatisfaction on the other, nearly completes the series of the causes which have produced the poverty of the country, and, as a direct result, the emigration of all that is

most comfortable, independent, and moral among us.

This poverty, arising, as it does, from so many causes, has propagated itself with a rapidity which is startling; for every one knows that poverty is proverbially prolific. And yet it is a grievous anomaly to reflect that a country so far steeped in misery and destitution as to have nearly one-half of its population in a state of most pitiable pauperism, possesses a soil capable of employing and maintaining three times the number of its inhabitants. When the causes, however, which we have just enumerated are seriously looked at and considered, we think its extraordinary result is, after all, so very natural, that the wonder would indeed be were the state of Ireland otherwise than it is. As matters stand at present, and as they are likely to continue, unless parliament shall interfere by a comprehensive measure of legislation, we must only rest contented with seeing the industrious, moral, and respectable portion of our countrymen abandoning the land of their birth and affections, and nothing but the very dregs—degraded alike by idleness and immorality—remaining behind to multiply and perpetuate their own wretchedness and degradation.

It has been often said, and with great truth, that no man is more devotedly attached to his native soil than an Irishman; yet it may reasonably be asked, how this principle of attachment can be reconciled with the strong tendency to emigration which characterizes our people. We reply, that the tendency in question is a proof of the love of honest industry, enterprise, and independence, by which our countrymen, when not degraded by neglect and poverty, are actuated. It is not of this class, however so degraded, that we now speak. On the contrary we take the decent and respectable farmer as the subject of our illustration—the man who, loving his native fields as if they were of his blood, would almost as soon part with the one as the other. This man it is, who, with the most child-like tenderness of affection towards the land on which he and his have lived for centuries, will, nevertheless, the moment he finds himself on the decline, and with no cheering hope of prosperity or encouragement before him or his family, resolutely determine to forget everything but the noble duties which he owes to himself and them. He sees clearly, from the unhappy state of the country, and the utter want of sympathy and attention which he experiences at the hands of those who ought to have his interests at heart, that if he attempt to hold his position under circumstances so depressing and unfavorable, he must gradually sink, until he and his become mingled with the great mass of pauperism which lies like an incubus upon the energies of the country. What, therefore, can possibly prove more strongly than this that the Irishman who is not dragged into the swamp of degradation, in which hope and energy are paralyzed, is strongly and heroically characterized by those virtues of industry and enterprise that throw their lustre over social life?

There are other and still more indefensible causes, however, which too frequently drive the independent farmer out of the country. In too many cases it happens that the rapacity and dishonesty of the agent, countenanced or stimulated by the necessities and reckless extravagance of the landlord, fall, like some unwholesome blight, upon that enterprise and industry which would ultimately, if properly encouraged, make the country prosperous and her landed proprietors independent men. We allude to the nefarious and monstrous custom of ejecting tenants who have made improvements, or, when permitted to remain, making them pay for the improvements which they have made. A vast proportion of this crying and oppressive evil must be laid directly to the charge of those who fill the responsible situation of agents to property in Ireland, than whom in general there does not exist, a more unscrupulous, oppressive, arrogant, and dishonest class of men. Exceptions of course there are, and many, but speaking of them as a body, we unhappily assert nothing but what the condition of property, and of those who live upon it, do at this moment and have for many a year testified.

Several months had now elapsed, and although the M'Mahons had waited upon the agent once or twice since the interview which we have already described between him and Tom, yet there seemed no corresponding anxiety on the part of Fethertonge to have the leases prepared or executed. This neglect or reluctance did not occasion much uneasiness to the old man, who was full of that generous and unsuspecting confidence that his countrymen always repose in the promise of a landlord respecting a lease, which they look upon, or did at least, as something absolutely inviolable and sacred, as indeed it ought to be. Bryan, however, who, although a young man, was not destitute of either observation or the experience which it bestows, and who, moreover, had no disposition to place unlimited confidence in Fethertonge, began to entertain some vague suspicions with reference to the delay. Fethertonge, however, had not the reputation of being a harsh man, or particularly unjust in his dealings with the world; on the con-

trary, he was rather liked than otherwise; for so soft was the melody of his voice, and so irresistible the friendship and urbanity of his manner, that many persons felt as much gratified by the refusal of a favor from him as they did at its being granted by another. At length, towards the close of October, Bryan himself told his father that he would call upon the agent and urge him to expedite the matter of the leases. "I don't know how it is," said he, "but some way or other I don't feel comfortable about this business: Fethertonge is very civil and very dacent, and is well spoken of in general; but for all that there's always a man here an' there that says he's not to be depended on."

"Troth an' he is to be depended on," said his generous father; "his words isn't like the words of a desaver, and it isn't till he shows the cloven foot that I'll ever give in that he's dishonest."

"Well," said Bryan, "I'm sure I for one hope you may be right; but, at any rate, as he's at home now I'll start and see him."

"Do then," said his father, "bekaise I know you're a favorite of his; for he tould me so wid his own lips."

"Well," replied the other, laughing, "I hope you're right there too; I'm sure *I* have no objection;" and he accordingly set out to see Fethertonge, but with something of an impression that the object of his visit was not likely to be accomplished without difficulty, if accomplished at all.

On reaching the agent's house he met a thin, tall man, named Clinton, with a hooked nose and sinister aspect, riding down the avenue, after having paid Fethertonge a visit. This person was the gauger of the district, a bachelor and a man of considerable wealth, got together, it is suspected, by practices that were not well capable of bearing the light. His family consisted of a niece and a nephew, the latter of whom had recently become a bosom friend of the accomplished Hycy Burke, who, it was whispered, began to look upon Miss Clinton with a partial eye. Hycy had got acquainted with him at the Herringstown races, where he, Hycy, rode and won a considerable sweepstakes; and as both young gentlemen were pretty much of the same habits of life, a very warm intimacy had, for some time past, subsisted between them. Clinton, to whom M'Mahon was known, addressed him in a friendly manner, and, after some chat, he laid the point of his whip gently upon Bryan's shoulder, so as to engage his attention.

"M'Mahon," said he, "I am glad I have met you, and I trust our meeting will be for your good. You have had a dispute with Hycy Burke?"

"Why, sir," replied Bryan, smiling, "if I had it wasn't such as it was worth his while to talk about."

"Well, M'Mahon, that's generously said on your part—now, listen to me; don't allow yourself to be drawn into any illegal or illicit proceedings by any one, friend or foe—if so, you will only put yourself into the power of your enemies; for enemies you have, I can assure you."

"They say, sir, there is no one without them," replied Bryan, smiling; "but so far as I am consarned, I don't exactly understand what you mane. I have no connection with anything, either illegal or—or—wrong in any way, Mr. Clinton, and if any one tould you so, they spoke an untruth."

"Ay, ay," said Clinton, "that may be so, and I hope it is so; but you know that it could not be expected you would admit it even if it be true. Will you in the mean time, be guided by a friend? I respect your father and his family; I respect yourself, M'Mahon; and, consequently, my advice to you is—keep out of the meshes of the law—avoid violating it—and remember you have enemies. Now think of these words, and so good-bye, M'Mahon! Indeed, I am glad for your own sake I met you—good-bye!"

As he uttered the last words he dashed on and left Bryan in a state of perfect amazement at the strange and incomprehensible nature of the communication he had just received. Indeed, so full was his mind of the circumstance, that forgetting all his suspicions of Fethertonge, and urged by the ingenuous impulse of an honest heart, he could not prevent himself in the surprise and agitation of the moment from detailing the conversation which he had just had with the gauger.

"That is singular enough," said Fethertonge—"he *named* Hycy Burke, then?"

"He did, sir."

"It *is* singular," proceeded the other, as if speaking to himself; "in truth, my dear M'Mahon, we were talking about you, discussing, in fact, the same subject not many minutes ago; and what you tell me now is only an additional proof that Clinton, who is sometimes harshly spoken of by the way, is a straightforward, honest man."

"What could he mane, sir?" asked Bryan, "I never had anything to do contrary to the law—I haven't now, nor do I ever intend to have—"

"Well, I'm sure I do not know," replied the agent: "he made no illusion of that kind to me, from a generous apprehension, I dare say, lest he might injure you in my opinion. He only desired me not rashly to

listen to anything prejudicial to your character; for that you had enemies who were laboring to injure you in some way—but how—he either would not tell, or perhaps did not know. I am glad, however, he mentioned it; for I shall be guarded should I hear anything to your prejudice."

"I tell you beforehand, sir," said Bryan, with the conscious warmth of rectitude, "and I think I ought to know best, that if you ever hear anything against my honesty or want of principle, or if any one should say that I will be consarned in what's contrary to either law or justice, you'll hear a falsehood—I don't care who it comes from—and the man who tells you so is a liar."

"I should be sorry to believe otherwise, my dear Bryan; it would grieve me to be forced to believe otherwise. If you suffer yourself to be drawn into anything wrong or improper, you will be the first individual of your family that ever brought a stain upon it. It would grieve me—deeply would it grieve me, to witness such a blot upon so honest—but no, I will not, for I cannot suppose it."

Bryan, whose disposition was full of good-nature and cheerfulness, could not help bursting into a hearty laugh, on reverting to the conversation which he had with Clinton, and comparing it with that in which they were now engaged; both of which were founded upon some soap-bubble charge of which he knew nothing.

"You take it lightly," said Fethertonge, with something of a serious expression; "but remember, my dear Bryan, that I now speak as one interested in, and, in fact, representing the other members of your family. Remember, at all events, you are forewarned, and, in the meantime, I thank Clinton—although I certainly would not have mentioned names. Bryan, you can have no objection that I should speak to your father on this subject?"

"Not the slightest, sir," replied Bryan; "spake to any one you like about it; but, putting that aside, sir, for the present—about these leases?"

"Why, what apprehension have you about them, Byran?"

"No apprehension, sir, sartinly; but you know yourself, Mr. Fethertonge, that to a man like me, that's layin' out and expendin' money every day upon Adaharra farm, and my father the same way upon Carriglass—I say, to a man like me, to be layin' out his money, when you know yourself that if the present landlord should refuse to carry his farher's dying words into effect—or, as you said this minute yourself, sir, if some enemy should turn you against me, amn't I and my father and the whole family liable to be put out, notwithstanding all the improvements we've made, and the money we've spent in makin' them?"

"Bryan," said Fethertonge, after a pause, "every word you say is unfortunately too true—too true—and such things, are a disgrace to the country; indeed, I believe, they seldom occur in any country but this. Will it in the mean time satisfy you when I state that, if old Mr. Chevydale's intentions are not carried into effect by his son, I shall forthwith resign my agency?"

Bryan's conscience, generous as he was, notwithstanding his suspicions, smote him deeply on hearing this determination so unequivocally expressed. Indeed the whole tenor of their dialogue, taken in at one view—especially Fethertonge's intention of speaking to Tom M'Mahon upon the mysterious subject of Bryan's suspected delinquencies against the law—so thoroughly satisfied him of the injustice he had rendered Fethertonge, that he was for a time silent.

At length he replied—"That, sir, is more than we could expect; but at any rate there's one thing I'm now sartin of—that, if we're disappointed, you won't be the cause of it."

"Yes; but of course you must put disappointment out of the question. The landlord, will, without any doubt, grant the leases—I am satisfied of that; indeed, there can be no doubt about it. By the way, I am anxious to see Ahadarra and to ascertain the extent to which you have carried your improvements. Clinton and I will probably take a ride up there some day soon; and in the meantime do you keep improving, M'Mahon, for that's the secret of all success—leave the rest to me. How is your father?"

"Never was better, sir, I'm thankful to you."

"And your gandfather? how does he bear up?"

"Faith, sir, wonderfully, considering his age."

"He must be very old now?"

"He's ninety-four, sir, and that's a long age sure enough; but I'm sorry to say that my mother's health isn't so well."

"Why, what is the matter with her? I'm sorry to hear this."

"Indeed we can't say; she's very poorly—her appetite is gone—she has a cough, an' she doesn't get her rest at night."

"Why don't you get medical advice?"

"So we did, sir. Dr. Sexton's attendin' her; but I don't think somehow that he has a good opinion of her."

"Sexton's a skilful man, and I don't think she could be in better hands; how-

over, Bryan, I shall feel obliged if you will send down occasionally to let me know how she gets on—once a week or so."

"Indeed we will, sir, an' I needn't say how much we feel obliged to you for your kindness and good wishes."

"It must be more than good wishes, Bryan; but I trust that she will get better. In the meantime leave the other matters to me, and you may expect Clinton and I up at your farm to look some of these days."

"God forgive me," thought Bryan, as he left the hall-door, "for the injustice I did him, by supposin' for one minute that he wasn't disposed to act fairly towards us. My father was right; an' it was foolish of me to put my wit against his age an' experience. Oh, no, that man's honest—there can't be any mistake about it."

From this topic he could not help reverting, as he pursued his way home, to the hints he had received with respect to Hycy Burke's enemity towards him, the cause of which he could not clearly understand. Hycy Burke had, in general, the character of being a generous, dashing young fellow, with no fault unless a disposition to gallantry and a thoughtless inclination for extravagance; for such were the gentle terms in which habits of seduction and an unscrupulous profligacy in the expenditure of money were clothed by those who at once fleeced and despised him, but who were numerous enough to impress those opinions upon a great number of the people. In turning over matters as they stood between them, he could trace Burke's enemity to no adequate cause; nor indeed could he believe it possible that he entertained any such inveterate feeling of hostility against him. They had of late frequently met, on which occasion Hycy spoke to him with nearly as much cordiality as ever. Still, however, he could not altogether free himself from the conviction, that both Clinton and Fethertonge must have had unquestionable grounds for the hints which they had in such a friendly way thrown out to him.

In this mood he was proceeding when he heard the noise of horses' feet behind, and in a few minutes Hycy himself and young Clinton overtook him at a rapid pace. Their conversation was friendly, as usual, when Bryan, on seeing Hycy about to dash off at the same rapid rate, said, "If you are not in a particular hurry, Hycy, I'd wish to have a word with you."

The latter immediately pulled up, exclaiming, "a word, Bryan! ay, a hundred—certainly. Clinton, ride on a bit, will you? till I have some conversation with M'Mahon. Well, Bryan?"

"Hycy," proceeded Bryan, "I always like to be aboveboard. Will you allow me to ask if you have any bad feelings against me?"

"Will you answer me another question?" replied Hycy.

"If I can I will," said Bryan.

"Well, then," replied Hycy, "I will answer you most candidly, Bryan—not the slightest; but I do assure you that I thought you had such a feeling against me."

"And you wor right, too," returned Bryan, "for I really had."

"I remember," proceeded Hycy, "that when I asked you to lend me thirty-five pounds—and by the way that reminds me that I am still pretty deep in your debt—you would neither lend it nor give any satisfactory reason why you refused me; now, what occasioned that feeling, Bryan?"

"It's by the merest chance that I happen to have the cause of it in my pocket," replied M'Mahon, who, as he spoke, handed him the letter which Peety Dhu had delivered to him from Hycy himself. "Read that," said he, "and I think you'll have no great trouble in understanding why I felt as I did;—an' indeed, Hycy, to tell you the truth, I never had the same opinion of you since." Hycy, to his utter amazement, read as follows:

"My Dear Miss Cavanagh:—

"Will you permit little Cupid, the god of Love, to enrol the name of Hycy Burke on the long list of your adorers? And if you could corrupt the little stone-blind divinity to blot out every name on it but my own, I should think that a very handsome anticipation of the joys of Paradise could be realized by that delightful fact. I say anticipation—for my creed is, that the actual joys of Paradise exist no where but within the celestial circle of your ambrosial arms. That is the Paradise which I propose to win; and you may rest assured that I shall bring the most flaming zeal, the most fervent devotion, and all the genuine piety of a true worshipper, to the task of attaining it. I shall carry, for instance, a little Bible of Love in my pocket—for I am already a divinity student or a young collegian under little Cupid aforesaid—and I will have it all dog-eared with refreshing texts for my edification. I should state, however, that I am, as every good Christian is, awfully exclusive in my creed; and will suffer no one, if I can prevent it, to approach the Paradise I speak of but myself. In fact I am as jealous as the very Deuce—whoever that personage may be—quite an Othello in my way—a perfect raw-head-and-bloody-bones—with a sharp appetite and teeth like a Walrus, ready to

bolt my rivals in dozens. It is said, my divine creature, or rather it is hinted, that a certain clodhopping boor, from the congenial wilds of Ahadarra, is favored by some benignant glances from those lights of yours that do mislead the moon. I hope this is not so—bow wow!—ho! ho!—I smell the blood of a rival; and be he great or small, red or black, or of any color in the rainbow, I shall have him for my breakfast—ho! ho! You see now, my most divine Kathleen, what a terrible animal to all rivals and competitors for your affections I shall be; and that if it were only for their own sakes, and to prevent carnage and cannibalism, it will be well for you to banish them once and forever, and be content only with myself.

"Seriously, my dear Kathleen, I believe I *am* half crazed; and, if so, you are the sole cause of it. I can think of no other object than your beautiful self; and I need scarcely say, that I shall have neither peace nor happiness unless I shall be fortunate enough to gain a place in your tender bosom. As for the Ahadarra man, I am suprised you should think of such an ignorant clodhopper—a fellow whose place Providence especially allotted to between the stilts of a plough, and at the tail of a pair of horses. Perhaps you would be kind enough to take a walk on Thursday evening, somewhere near the river—where I hope I shall have an opportunity of declaring my affection for you in person. At all events I shall be there with the ardent expectation of meeting you.

"Ever your devoted worshipper,

"Hycy Burke.

"P.S.—Beware the clodhopper—bow vow!—ho! ho!"

On looking at the back of this singular production he was thunderstruck to perceive that it was addressed to "Mr. Bryan M'Mahon, Ahadarra"—the fact being that, in the hurry of the moment, he had misdirected the letters—Bryan M'Mahon having received that which had been intended for Kathleen, who, on the contrary, was pressingly solicited to lend him thirty-fine pounds in order to secure "Crazy Jane."

Having perused this precious production, Hycy, in spite of his chagrin, was not able to control a most irresistible fit of laughter, in which he indulged for some minutes. The mistake being now discovered in Bryan's case was necessarily discovered in that of both, a circumstance which to Hycy, who now fully understood the nature and consequences of his blunder, was, as we have stated, the subject of extraordinary mirth, in which, to tell the truth, Bryan could not prevent himself from joining him.

"Well, but after all, Bryan," said he, "what is there in this letter to make you angry with me? Don't you see it's a piece of humbug from beginning to end."

"I do, and I did," replied Bryan; "but at that time I had never spoken upon the subject of love or marriage to Kathleen Cavanagh, and I had no authority nor right to take any one to task on her account, but, at the same time, I couldn't even then either like or respect, much less lend money to, any man that could humbug her, or treat such a girl with disrespect—and in that letther you can't deny that you did both."

"I grant," said Hycy, "that it was a piece of humbug certainly, but not intended to offend her."

"I'm afraid there was more in it, Hycy," observed Bryan; "an' that if she had been foolish or inexperienced enough to meet you or listen to your discourse, it might a' been worse for herself. You were mistaken there though."

"She is not a girl to be humbugged, I grant, Bryan—very far from it, indeed; and now that you and she understand each other I will go farther for both your sakes, and say, that I regret having written such a letter to such an admirable young woman as she is. To tell you the truth, Bryan, I shall half envy you the possession of such a wife."

"As to that," replied the other, smiling, "we'll keep never minding—but you have spoken fairly and honestly on the subject of the letther, an' I'm thankful to you; still, Hycy, you haven't answered my first question—have you any ill feeling against me, or any intention to injure me?"

"Neither one nor the other. I pledge you my honor and word I have no ill feeling against you, nor any design to injure you."

"That's enough, Hycy," replied his companion; "I think I'm bound to believe your words."

"You are, Bryan; but will you allow me to ask if any one ever told you that I had—and if so, who was the person?"

"It's enough for you to know," said Bryan, "that whoever told it to me I don't believe it."

"I certainly have a right to know," returned Hycy; "but as the matter is false, and every way unfounded, I'll not press you upon it—all I can say to satisfy you is, what I have said already—that I entertain no ill will or unfriendly feeling towards you, and, consequently, can have no earthly intention of doing you an injury even if I could, although at the present moment I don't see how, even if I was willing."

"You have nothing particular that you'd wish to say to me?"

"No: devil a syllable."

"Nor a proposal of any kind to make me?"

Hycy pulled up his horse.

"Bryan, my good friend, let me look at you," he exclaimed. "Is it right to have you at large? My word and honor I'm beginning to fear that there's something wrong with your upper works."

"Never mind," replied Bryan, laughing, "I'm satisfied—the thing's a mistake—so there's my hand to you, Hycy. I've no suspicion of the kind against you and it's all right."

"What proposal, in heaven's name, could I have to make to you?" exclaimed Hycy.

"There now," continued Bryan, "that'll do; didn't I say I was satisfied? Move on, now and overtake your friend—by the way he's a fine horseman, they say?"

"Very few better," said Hycy; "but some there are—and *one* I know—ha! ha! ha! Good-bye, Bryan, and don't be made a fool of for nothing."

Bryan nodded and laughed, and Hycy dashed on to overtake his friend Clinton.

M'Mahon's way home lay by Gerald Cavanagh's house, near which as he approached he saw Nanny Peety in close conversation with Kate Hogan. The circumstance, knowing their relationship as he did, made no impression whatsoever upon him, nor would he have bestowed a thought upon it, had he been left to his own will in the matter. The women separated ere he had come within three hundred yards of them; Kate, who had evidently been convoying her niece a part of the way, having returned in the direction of Cavanagh's, leaving Nanny to pursue her journey home, by which she necessarily met M'Mahon.

"Well, Nanny," said the latter, "how are you?"

"Faix, very well, I thank you, Bryan; how are all the family in Carriglass?"

"Barring my mother, they're all well, Nanny. I was glad to hear you got so good a place, an' I'm still betther plaised to see you look so well—for it's a proof that you feel comfortable in it."

"Why I can't complain," she replied; "but you know there's no one widout their throubles."

"Troubles, Nanny," said Bryan, with surprise; "why surely, Nanny, barrin' it's love, I don't see what trouble you can have."

"Well, and may be it is," said the girl, smiling.

"Oh, in that case," replied Bryan, "I grant you're to be pitied; poor thing, you look so ill and pale upon it, too. An' what is it like, Nanny—this same love that's on you?"

"Faig," she replied, archly, "it's well for you that Miss Kathleen's not to the fore or you daren't ax any one sich a question as *that*."

"Well done, Nanny," he returned; "do you think *she* knows what it's like?"

"It's not me," she replied again, "you ought to be axin' sich a question from; if *you* don't know it I dunna who ought."

"Begad, you're sharp an' ready, Nanny," replied Bryan, laughing; "well, and how are you all in honest Jemmy Burke's?"

"Some of us good, some of us bad, and some of us indifferent, but, thank goodness, all in the best o' health."

"Good, bad, and indifferent," replied Bryan, pausing a little. "Well, now, Nanny, if one was to ask you who is the good in your family, what would you say?"

"Of coorse myself," she returned; "an' stay—let me see—ay, the masther, honest Jemmy, he and I have the goodness between us."

"And who's the indifferent, Nanny?"

"Wait," she replied; "yes—no doubt of it—if not worse—why the mistress must come in for that, I think."

"And now for the bad, Nanny?"

She shook her head before she spoke. "Ah," she proceeded, "there would be more in that house on the bad list than there is, if *he* had his way."

"If who had his way?"

"Masther Hycy."

"Why is he the *bad* among you?"

"Thank God I know him now," she replied, "an' he knows I do; but he doesn't know how well I know him."

"Why, Nanny, are you in airnest?" asked Bryan, a good deal surprised, and not a little interested at what he heard, "surely I thought Mr. Hycy a good-hearted, generous young fellow that one could depend upon, at all events?"

"Ah, it's little you know him," she replied; "and I could"—she looked at him, and paused.

"You could what?" he asked.

"I could tell you something, but I daren't."

"Daren't; why what ought you be afraid of?"

"It's no matther, I daren't an' that's enough; only aren't you an' Kathleen Cavanagh goin' to be married?"

"We will be married, I hope."

"Well, then, keep a sharp look-out, an' take care her father an' mother doesn't turn against you some o' these days. There's

many a slip between the cup and the lip; that's all I can say, an' more than I ought; an' if you ever mention my name, its murdhered I'll be."

"An' how is Hycy consarned in this? or is he consarned in it?"

"He is, an' he is not; I dursn't tell you more; but I'm not afraid of *him*, so far from that, I could soon—but what am I sayin'? Good-bye, an' as I said, keep a sharp look-out;" and having uttered these words, she tripped on hastily and left him exceedingly surprised at what she had said.

CHAPTER X.

A Family Debate—More of the Hycy Correspondence —Honest Speculations.

KATHLEEN'S refusal to dance, at the kemp, with Hycy Burke, drew down upon her the loud and vehement indignation of her parents, both of whom looked upon a matrimonial alliance with the Burkes as an object exceedingly desirable, and such as would reflect considerable credit on themselves. Gerald Cavanagh and his wife were certainly persons of the strictest integrity and virtue. Kind, charitable, overflowing with hospitality, and remarkable for the domestic virtues and affections in an extraordinary degree, they were, notwithstanding, extremely weak-minded, and almost silly, in consequence of an over-weening anxiety to procure "great matches" for their children. Indeed it may be observed, that natural affection frequently assumes this shape in the paternal heart, nor is the vain ambition confined to the Irish peasant alone. On the contrary, it may be seen as frequently, if not more so, in the middle and higher classes, where it has ampler scope to work, than in humbler and more virtuous life. It is this proud and ridiculous principle which consigns youth, and beauty, and innocence, to the arms of some dissipated profligate of rank, merely because he happens to inherit a title which he disgraces. There is, we would wager, scarcely an individual who knows the world, but is acquainted with some family laboring under this insane anxiety for connection. Sometimes it is to be found on the paternal side, but, like most of those senseless inconsistencies which entail little else than ridicule or ruin, and sometimes both, upon those who are the object of them, it is, for the most part, a female attribute.

Such as it is, however, our friend, Gerald Cavanagh, and his wife—who, by the way, bore the domestic sceptre in all matters of importance—both possessed it in all its amplitude and vigor. When the kemp had been broken up that night, and the family assembled, Mrs. Cavanagh opened the debate in an oration of great heat and bitterness, but sadly deficient in moderation and logic.

"What on earth could you mane, Kathleen," she proceeded, "to refuse dancin' wid such a young man—a gintleman I ought to say—as Hycy Burke, the son of the wealthiest man in the whole parish, barring the gentry? Where is the girl that wouldn't bounce at him?—that wouldn't lave a single card unturned to secure him? Won't he have all his father's wealth?—won't he have all his land when the ould man dies? and indeed it's he that will live in jinteel style when he gets everything into his own hands, as he ought to do, an' not go dhramin' an' dhromin' about like his ould father, without bein' sartin whether he's alive or not. He would be something for you, girl, something to turn out wid, an' that one could feel proud out of; but indeed, Kathleen, as for pride and decency, you never had as much o' them as you ought, nor do you hold your head as high as many another girl in your place would do. Deed and throth I'm vexed at you, and ashamed of you, to go for to hurt his feelins as you did, widout either rhyme or raison."

"Troth," said her father, taking up the argument where she left it, "I dunno how I'll look the respectable young man in the face afther the way you insulted him. Why on airth wouldn't you dance wid him?"

"Because, father, I don't like him."

"An' why don't you like him?" asked her mother. "Where is there his aquil for either face or figure in the parish, or the barony itself? But I know the cause of it; you could dance with Bryan M'Mahon. But take this with you—sorra ring ever Bryan M'Mahon will put on you wid my consent or your father's, while there's any hope of Hycy Burke at any rate."

Kathleen, during this long harangue, sat smiling and sedate, turning her beautiful and brilliant eyes sometimes upon one parent, sometimes upon another, and occasionally glancing with imperturbable sweetness and good nature at her sister Hanna. At length, on getting an opportunity of speaking, she replied,—

"Don't ask me, mother, to give anything in the way of encouragement to Hycy Burke; don't ask me, I entrate you, for God's sake—the thing's impossible, and I couldn't do it. I have no wish for his father's money, nor any wish for the poor grandeur that you, mother dear, and my father, seem to set your

heart upon. I don't like Hycy Burke—I could never like him; and rather than marry him, I declare solemnly to God, I would prefer going into my grave."

As she uttered the last words, which she did with an earnestness that startled them, her fine features became illuminated, as it were, with a serene and brilliant solemnity of expression that was strikingly impressive and beautiful.

"Why couldn't you like him, now?" asked her father; "sure, as your mother says, there's not his aquil for face or figure within many a mile of him?"

"But it's neither face nor figure that I look to most, father."

"Well, but think of his wealth, and the style he'll live in, I'll go bail, when he gets married."

"That style maybe won't make his wife happy. No, father, it's neither face, nor figure, nor style that I look to, but truth, pure affection, and upright principle; now, I know that Hycy Burke has neither truth, nor affection, nor principle; an' I wondher, besides, that you could think of my ever marrying a man that has already destroyed the happiness of two innocent girls, an' brought desolation, an' sorrow, an' shame upon two happy families. Do you think that I will ever become the wife of a profligate? An' is it you, father, an' still more you, mother, that's a woman, that can urge me to think of joining my fate to that of a man that has neither shame nor principle? I thought that if you didn't respect decency an' truth, and a regard for what is right and proper, that, at all events, you would respect the feelings of your child that was taught their value.

Both parents felt somewhat abashed by the force of the truth and the evident superiority of her character; but in a minute or two her worthy father, from whose dogged obstinacy she inherited the firmness and resolution for which she had ever been remarkable, again returned to the subject.

"If Hycy Burke was wild, Kathleen, so was many a good man before him; an' that's no raison but he may turn out well yet, an' a credit to his name, as I have no doubt he will. All that he did was only folly an' indiscretion—we can't be too hard or uncharitable upon our fellow-craytures."

"No," chimed in her mother, "we can't. Doesn't all the world know that a reformed rake makes a good husband?—an' besides, didn't them two huzzies bring it on themselves?—why didn't they keep from him as they ought? The fault, in such cases, is never all on one side."

Kathleen's brow and face and whole neck became crimson, as her mother, in the worst spirit of a low and degrading ambition, uttered the sentiments we have just written. Hanna had been all this time sitting beside her, with one arm on her shoulder; but Kathleen, now turning round, laid her face on her sister's bosom, and, with a pressure that indicated shame and bitterness of heart, she wept. Hanna returned this melancholy and distressing caress in the same mournful spirit, and both wept together in silence.

Gerald Cavanagh was the first who felt something like shame at the rebuke conveyed by this tearful embrace of his pure-hearted and ingenuous daughters, and he said, addressing his wife:—

"We're wrong to defend him, or any one, for the evil he has done, bekaise it can't be defended; but, in the mane time, every day will bring him more sense an' experience, an' he won't repate this work; besides, a wife would settle him down."

"But, father," said Hanna, now speaking for the first time, "there's one thing that strikes me in the business you're talkin' about, an' it's this—how do you know whether Hycy Burke has any notion, good, bad, or indifferent, of marrying Kathleen?"

"Why," replied her mother, "didn't he write to her upon the subject?"

"Why, indeed, mother, it's not an easy thing to answer that question," replied Hanna. "She sartinly resaved a letther from him, an' indeed, I think," she added, her animated face brightening into a smile, "that as the boys is gone to bed, we had as good read it."

"No, Hanna, darling, don't," said Kathleen—"I beg you won't read it."

"Well, but I beg I will," she replied; "it'll show them, at any rate, what kind of a reformation is likely to come over him. I have it here in my pocket—ay, this is it. Now, father," she proceeded, looking at the letter, "here is a letter, sent to my sister—'To Miss Cavanagh,' that's what's on the back of it—and what do you think Hycy, the sportheen, asks her to do for him?"

"Why, I suppose," replied her mother, "to run away wid him?"

"No."

"Then to give her consent to marry him?" said her father.

"Both out," replied Hanna; "no, indeed, but to lend him five-and-thirty pounds to buy a mare, called Crazy Jane, belonging to Tom Burton, of the Race Road!"

"'My Dear Bryan—For heaven's sake, in addition to your other generosities—for which I acknowledge myself still in your debt—will you lend me thirty-five pounds, to secure a beautiful mare belonging to Tom

Burton, of the Race Road? She is a perfect creature, and will, if I am not quick, certainly slip through my fingers. Jemmy, the gentleman'—

"This is what he calls his father, you must know.

"'Jemmy, the gentleman, has promised to stand to me some of these days, and pay off all my transgressions, like a good, kind-hearted, soft-headed old Trojan as he is; and, for this reason, I don't wish to press him now. The mare is sold under peculiar circumstances; otherwise I could have no chance of her at such a price. By the way, when did you see Katsey'—

"Ay, Katsey!—think of that, now—doesn't he respect your daughter very much, father?

"'By the way, when did you see Katsey Cavanagh?—'"

"What is this you're readin' to me?" asked her father. "You don't mean to say that this letter is to Kathleen?"

"Why, no; but so much the better—one has an opportunity now of seein' what he is made of. The letter was intended for Bryan M'Mahon; but he sent it, by mistake, to Kathleen. Listen—

"'When did you see Katsey Cavanagh? She certainly is not ill-looking, and will originate you famous mountaineers. Do, like a good fellow, stand by me at this pinch, and I will drink your health and Katsey's, and that you may—' (what's this?) 'col—colonize Ahadarra with a race of young Colossusses that the world will wonder at.

"'Ever thine,

"'H. BURKE.'

"Here's more, though: listen, mother, to your favorite, that you want to marry Kathleen to:—

"'P. S. I will clear scores with you for all in the course of a few months, and remember that, at your marriage, I must, with my own hand, give you away to Katsey, the fair Colossa.'"

The perusal of this document, at least so far as they could understand it, astonished them not a little. Until they heard it read, both had been of the opinion that Hycy had actually proposed for Kathleen, or at least felt exceedingly anxious for the match.

"An' does he talk about givin' her away to Bryan M'Mahon?" asked her mother. Sorrow on his impidence!—Bryan M'Mahon indeed! Throth, it's not upon his country side of wild mountain that Kathleen will go to live. An' maybe, too, she has little loss in the same Hycy, for, afther all, he's but a skite of a fellow, an' a profligate into the bargain."

"Faix an' his father," said Gerald—"honest Jemmy—tould me that he'd have it a match whether or not."

"His father did!" exclaimed Mrs. Cavanagh; "now, did he say so, Gerald?"

"Well, in troth he did—said that he had set his heart upon it, an' that if she hadn't a gown to her back he'd make him marry her."

"The Lord direct us for the best!" exclaimed his wife, whose opinion of the matter this last piece of information had again changed in favor of Hycy. "Sure, afther all, one oughtn't to be too sevare on so young a man. However, as the sayin' is, 'time will tell,' an' Kathleen's own good sense will show her what a match he'd be."

The sisters then retired to bed; but before they went, Kathleen approached her mother, and putting an open palm affectionately upon each of the good woman's cheeks, said, in a voice in which there was deep feeling and affection:—

"Good-night, mother dear! I'm sure you love me, an' I know it is because you do that you spake in this way; but I know, too, that you wouldn't make me unhappy and miserable for the wealth of the world, much less for Hycy Burke's share of it. There's a kiss for you, and good-night!—there's another for you, father; God bless you! and good-night, too. Come, Hanna darling, come!"

In this state matters rested for some time. Bryan M'Mahon, however, soon got an opportunity of disclosing his intentions to Kathleen, if that can be called disclosing, which was tolerably well known for a considerable time previous to the disclosure. Between them it was arranged that he and his father should make a formal proposal of marriage to her parents, as the best means of bringing the matter to a speedy issue. Before this was done, however, Gerald, at the instigation of his wife, contrived once more to introduce the subject as if by accident, in a conversation with Jemmy Burke, who repeated his anxiety for the match as the best way of settling down his son, and added, that he would lay the matter before Hycy himself, with a wish that a union should take place between them. This interview with old Burke proved a stumbling-block in the way of M'Mahon. At length, after a formal proposal on the behalf of Bryan, and many interviews with reference to it, some-

thing like a compromise was effected. Kathleen consented to accept the latter in marriage, but firmly and resolutely refused to hear Burke's name as a lover or suitor mentioned. Her parents, however, hoping that their influence over her might ultimately prevail, requested that she would not engage herself to any one for two years, at the expiration of which period, if no change in her sentiments should take place, she was to be at liberty to marry M'Mahon. For the remainder of the summer and autumn, and up until November, the period at which our narrative has now arrived, or, in other words, when Bryan M'Mahon met Nanny Peety, matters had rested precisely in the same position. This unexpected interview with the mendicant's daughter, joined to the hints he had already received, once more caused M'Mahon to feel considerably perplexed with regard to Hycy Burke. The coincidence was very remarkable, and the identity of the information, however limited, appeared to him to deserve all the consideration which he could bestow upon it, but above all things he resolved, if possible, to extract the secret out of Nanny Peety.

One cause of Hycy Burke's extravagance was a hospitable habit of dining and giving dinners in the head inn of Ballymacan. To ask any of his associates to his father's house was only to expose the ignorance of his parents, and this his pride would not suffer him to do. As a matter of course he gave all his dinners, unless upon rare occasions, in Jack Shepherd's excellent inn; but as young Clinton and he were on terms of the most confidential intimacy, he had asked him to dine on the day in question at his father's.

"You know, my dear Harry," he said to his friend, "there is no use in striving to conceal the honest vulgarity of Jemmy the gentleman from you who know it already. I may say ditto to madam, who is unquestionably the most vulgar of the two—for, and I am sorry to say it, in addition to a superabundant stock of vulgarity, she has still a larger assortment of the prides; for instance, pride of wealth, of the purse, pride of—I was going to add, birth—ha! ha! ha!—of person, ay, of beauty, if you please—of her large possessions—but that comes under the purse again—and lastly—but that is the only well-founded principle among them—of her accomplished son, Hycy. This, now, being all within your cognizance already, my dear Hal, you take a pig's cheek and a fowl with me to-day. There will be nobody but ourselves, for when I see company at home I neither admit the gentleman nor the lady to table. Damn it, you know the thing would be impossible. If you wish it, however, we shall probably call in the gentleman after dinner to have a quiz with him; it may relieve us. I can promise you a glass of wine, too, and that's another reason why we should keep him aloof until the punch comes. The wine's always a *sub silentio* affair, and, may heaven pity me, I get growling enough from old Bruin on other subjects."

"Anything you wish, Hycy, I am your man; but somehow I don't relish the idea of the quiz you speak of. 'Children, obey your parents,' says Holy Scripture; and I'd as soon not help a young fellow to laugh at his father."

"A devilish good subject he is, though—but you must know that I can draw just distinctions, Hal. For instance, I respect his honesty——".

"And copy it, eh?"

"Certainly. I respect his integrity, too—in fact, I appreciate all his good qualities, and only laugh at his vulgarity and foibles."

"You intend to marry, Hycy?"

"Or, in other words, to call you brother some of these days."

"And to have sons and daughters?"

"Please the fates."

"That will do," replied Clinton, dryly.

"Ho! ho!" said Hycy, "I see. Here's a mentor with a vengeance—a fellow with a budget of morals cut and dry for immediate use—but hang all morality, say I; like some of my friends that talk on the subject, I have an idiosyncrasy of constitution against it, but an abundant temperament for pleasure."

"That's a good definition," said Clinton; "a master-touch, a very correct likeness, indeed. I would at once know you from it, and so would most of your friends."

"This day is Friday," said Hycy, "more growling."

"Why so?"

"Why, when I eat meat on a Friday, the pepper and sauce cost me nothing. The 'gentlemen' lays on hard, but the lady extenuates, 'in regard to it's bein' jinteel.'"

"Well, but you have certainly no scruple yourself on the subject?"

"Yes, I have, sir, a very strong one—in favor of the meat—ha! ha! ha!"

"D—n me, whoever christened you Hycy the accomplished, hit you off."

"I did myself; because you must know, my worthy Hal, that, along with all my other accomplishments, I am my own priest."

"And that is the reason why you hate the clergy? eh—ha! ha! ha!"

"A hit, a hit, I do confess."

"Harke, Mr. Priest, will you give absolution—to Tom Corbet?"

"Ah! Hal, no more an' thou lovest me—that sore is yet open. Curse the villain.

My word and honor, Hal, 'the gentleman' was right there. He told me at the first glance what she was. Here comes a shower, let us move on, and reach Ballymacan, if possible, before it falls. We shall be home in fair time for dinner afterwards, and then for my proposal, which, by the word and honor—"

"And morality?"

"Nonsense, Harry; is a man to speak nothing but truth or Scripture in this world? —No—which I say by the honor of a gentleman, it will be your interest to consider and accept."

"Very well, most accomplished. We shall see, and we shall hear, and then we shall determine."

A ham and turkey were substituted for the pig's cheek and fowl, and we need not say that Hycy and his friend accepted of the substitution with great complacency. Dinner having been discussed, and a bottle of wine finished, the punch came in, and each, after making himself a stiff tumbler, acknowledged that he felt comfortable. Hycy, however, anxious that he should make an impression, or in other words gain his point, allowed Clinton to grow a little warm with liquor before he opened the subject to which he had alluded. At length, when he had reached the proper elevation, he began:—

"There's no man, my dear Harry, speaks apparently more nonsense than I do in ordinary chat and conversation. For instance, to-day I was very successful in it; but no matter, I hate seriousness, certainly, when there is no necessity for it. However, as a set-off to that, I pledge you my honor that no man can be more serious when it is necessary than myself. For instance, you let out a matter to me the other night that you probably forget now. You needn't stare—I am serious enough and honorable enough to keep as an inviolable secret everything of the kind that a man may happen to disclose in an unguarded moment."

"Go on, Hycy, I don't forget it—I don't, upon my soul."

"I allude to M'Mahon's farm in Ahadarra."

"I don't forget it; but you know, Hycy, my boy, I didn't mention either M'Mahon or Ahadarra."

"You certainly did not mention them exactly; but, do you think I did not know at once both the place and the party you allude to? My word and honor, I saw them at a glance."

"Very well, go on with your word and honor;—you are right, I did mean M'Mahon and Ahadarra—proceed, most accomplished, and most moral—"

"Be quiet, Harry. Well, you have your eye upon that farm, and you say you have a promise of it."

"Something like it; but the d—d landlord, Chevydale, is impracticable—so my uncle says—and doesn't wish to disturb the M'Mahons, although he has been shown that it is his interest to do so—but d—n the fellow, neither he nor one of his family ever look to their interests—d—n the fellow, I say."

"Don't curse or swear, most moral. Well, the lease of Ahadarra has dropped, and of Carriglass too;—with Carriglass, however, we—that is you—have nothing at all to do."

"Proceed."

"Now, I have already told you my affection for your sister, and I have not been able to get either yes or no out of you."

"No."

"What do you mean?"

"That you have not been able to get yes or no out of me—proceed, most accomplished. Where do you get your brandy? This is glorious. Well!"

"Now, as you have a scruple against taking the farm in any but a decent way, if I undertake to manage matters so as that Bryan M'Mahon shall be obliged to give up his farm, will you support my suit with Miss Clinton?"

"How will you do it?"

"That is what you shall not know; but the means are amply within my power. You know my circumstances, and that I shall inherit all my father's property."

"Come; I shall hold myself neuter—will that satisfy you? You shall have a clear stage and no favor, which, if you be a man of spirit, is enough."

"Yes; but it is likely I may require your advocacy with Uncle; and, besides, I know the advantage of having an absent friend well and favorably spoken of, and all his good points brought out."

"Crazy Jane and Tom Burton, to wit; proceed, most ingenuous!"

"Curse them both! Will you promise this—to support me so far?"

"Egad, Hycy, that's a devilish pretty girl that attends us with the hot water, and that waited on us at dinner—eh?"

"Come, come, Master Harry, 'ware spring-guns there; keep quiet. You don't answer?"

"But, worthy Hycy, what if Maria should reject you—discard you—give you to the winds?—eh?"

"Even in that case, provided you support me honestly, I shall hold myself bound to keep my engagement with you, and put M'Mahon out as a beggar."

"What! as a beggar?"

"Ay, as a beggar; and then no blame could possibly attach to you for succeeding him, and certainly no suspicion."

"Hum! as a beggar. But the poor fellow never offended me. Confound it, he never offended me, nor any one else as far as I know. I don't much relish that, Hycy."

"It cannot be done though in any other way."

"I say—how do you call that girl?—Jenny, or Peggy, or Molly, or what?"

"I wish to heaven you could be serious, Harry. If not, I shall drop the subject altogether."

"There now—proceed, O Hyacinthus."

"How can I proceed, when you won't pay attention to me; or, what is more, to your own interests?"

"Oh! my own interests!—well I am alive to them."

"Is it a bargain, then?"

"It *is* a bargain, most ingenuous, most subtle, and most conscientious Hycy! Enable me to enter upon the farm of Ahadarra—to get possession of it—and calculate upon my most—let me see—what's the best word—most strenuous advocacy. That's it: there's my hand upon it. I shall support you, Hycy; but, at the same time, you must not hold me accountable for my sister's conduct. Beyond fair and reasonable persuasion, she must be left perfectly free and uncontrolled in whatever decision she may come to."

"There's my hand, then, Harry; I can ask no more."

After Clinton had gone, Hycy felt considerably puzzled as to the manner in which he had conducted himself during the whole evening. Sometimes he imagined he was under the influence of liquor, for he had drunk pretty freely; and again it struck him that he manifested an indifference to the proposal made to him, which he only attempted to conceal lest Hycy might perceive it. He thought, however, that he observed a seriousness in Clinton, towards the close of their conversation, which could not have been assumed; and as he gave himself a good deal of credit for penetration, he felt satisfied that circumstances were in a proper train, and likely, by a little management, to work out his purposes.

Hycy, having bade him good night at the hall-door, returned again to the parlor, and called Nanny Peety—"Nanny," said he, "which of the Hogans did you see to-day?"

"None o' them, sir, barrin' Kate: they wor all out."

"Did you give her the message?"

"Why, sir, if it can be called a message, I did."

"What did you say, now?"

"Why, I tould her to tell whichever o' them she happened to see first, that St. Peter was dead."

"And what did she say to that?"

"Why, sir, she said it would be a good story for you if he was."

"And what did she mean by that, do you think?"

"Faix, then, I dunna—barrin' that you're in the black books wid him, and that you'd have a better chance of gettin' in undher a stranger that didn't know you."

"Nanny," he replied, laughing, "you are certainly a very smart girl, and indeed a very pretty girl—a very interesting young woman, indeed, Nanny; but you won't listen to reason."

"To raison, sir, I'll always listen; but not to wickedness or evil."

"Will you have a glass of punch? I hope there is neither wickedness nor evil in that."

"I'm afraid, sir, that girls like me have often found to their cost too much of both in it. Thank you, Masther Hycy, but I won't have it; you know I won't."

"So you will stand in your own light, Nanny?"

"I hope not, sir; and, wanst for all, Mr. Hycy, there's no use in spakin' to me as you do. I'm a poor humble girl, an' has nothing but my character to look to."

"And is that all you're afraid of, Nanny?"

"I'm afear'd of Almighty God, sir: an' if you had a little fear of Him, too, Mr. Hycy, you wouldn't spake to me as you do."

"Why, Nanny, you're almost a saint on our hands."

"I'm glad to hear it, sir, for the sinners is plenty enough."

"Very good, Nanny; well said. Here's half a crown to reward your wit."

"No, no, Mr. Hycy: I'm thankful to you; but you know I won't take it."

"Nanny, are you aware that it was I who caused you to be taken into this family?"

"No, sir; but I think it's very likely you'll be the cause of my going out of it."

"It certainly is not improbable, Nanny. I will have no self-willed, impracticable girls here."

"You won't have me here long, then, unless you mend your manners, Mr. Hycy."

"Well, well, Nanny; let us not quarrel at all events. I will be late out to-night, so that you must sit up and let me in. No, no, Nanny, we must not quarrel; and if I have got fond of you, how can I help it? It's a very natural thing, you know, to love a pretty girl."

"But not so natural to lave her, Mr. Hycy, as you have left others before now—I needn't

name them—widout name, or fame, or hope, or happiness in this world."

"I won't be in until late, Nanny," he replied, coolly. "Sit up for me. You're a sharp one, but I can't spare you yet a while;" and, having nodded to her with a remarkably benign aspect he went out.

"Ay," said she, after he had gone; "little you know, you hardened and heartless profligate, how well I'm up to your schemes. Little you know that I heard your bargain this evenin' wid Clinton, and that you're now gone to meet the Hogans and Teddy Phats upon some dark business, that can't be good or they wouldn't be in it; an' little you know what I know besides. Anybody the misthress plaises may sit up for you, but I won't."

CHAPTER XI.

Death of a Virtuous Mother.

It could not be expected that Bryan M'Mahon, on his way home from Fethertonge's, would pass Gerald Cavanagh's without calling. He had, in his interview with that gentleman, stated the nature of his mother's illness, but at the same time without feeling any serious apprehensions that her life was in immediate danger. On reaching Cavanagh's, he found that family overshadowed with a gloom for which he could not account. Kathleen received him gravely, and even Hanna had not her accustomed jest. After looking around him for a little, he exclaimed—"What is the matther? Is anything wrong? You all look as if you were in sorrow."

Hanna approached him and said, whilst her eyes filled with tears—"We are in sorrow, Bryan; for we are goin', we doubt, to lose a friend that we all love—as every one did that knew her."

"Hanna, darling," said Kathleen, "this won't do. Poor girl! you are likely to make bad worse; and besides there may, after all, be no real danger. Your mother, Bryan," she proceeded, "is much worse than she has been. The priest and doctor have been sent for; but you know it doesn't follow that there is danger, or at any rate that the case is hopeless."

"Oh, my God!" exclaimed Bryan, "is it so? My mother—and such a mother! Kathleen, my heart this minute tells me it *is* hopeless. I must leave you—I must go."

"We will go up with you," said Kathleen. "Hanna, we will go up; for, if she is in danger, I would like to get the blessing of such a woman before she dies; but let us trust in God she won't die, and that it's only a sudden attack that will pass away."

"Do so, Kathleen," said her mother; "and you can fetch us word how she is. May the Lord bring her safe over it at any rate; for surely the family will break their hearts afther her, an' no wondher, for where was her fellow?"

Bryan was not capable of hearing these praises, which he knew to be so well and so justly her due, with firmness; nor could he prevent his tears, unless by a great effort, from bearing testimony to the depth of his grief. Kathleen's gaze, however, was turned on him with an expression which gave him strength; for indeed there was something noble and sustaining in the earnest and consoling sympathy which he read in her dark and glorious eye. On their way to Carriglass there was little spoken. Bryan's eye every now and then sought that of Kathleen; and he learned, for the first time, that it is only in affliction that the exquisite tenderness of true and disinterested love can be properly appreciated and felt. Indeed he wondered at his own sensations; for in proportion as his heart became alarmed at the contemplation of his mother's loss, he felt, whenever he looked upon Kathleen, that it also burned towards her with greater tenderness and power—so true is it that sorrow and suffering purify and exalt all our nobler and better emotions.

Bryan and his companions, ere they had time to reach the house, were seen and recognized by the family, who, from the restlessness and uncertainty which illness usually occasions, kept moving about and running out from time to time to watch the arrival of the priest or doctor. On this occasion Dora came to meet them; but, alas! with what a different spirit from that which animated her on the return of her father from the metropolis. Her gait was now slow, her step languid; and they could perceive that, as she approached them, she wiped away the tears. Indeed her whole appearance was indicative of the state of her mother; when they met her, her bitter sobbing and the sorrowful earnestness of manner with which she embraced the sisters, were melancholy assurances that the condition of the sufferer was not improved. Hanna joined her tears with hers; but Kathleen, whose sweet voice in attempting to give the affectionate girl consolation, was more than once almost shaken out of its firmness, did all she could to soothe and relieve her.

On entering the house, they found a number of the neighboring females assembled, and indeed the whole family, in consequence of the alarm and agitation visible among

them, might not inaptly be compared to a brood of domestic fowl when a hawk, bent on destruction, is seen hovering over their heads.

As is usual with Catholic families in their state of life, there were several of those assembled, and also some of themselves, at joint prayer in different parts of the house; and seated by her bedside was her youngest son, Art, engaged, with sobbing voice and eyes every now and then blinded with tears, in the perusal, for her comfort, of Prayers for the Sick. Tom M'Mahon himself went about every now and then clasping his hands, and turning up his eyes to heaven in a distracted manner, exclaiming—"Oh! Bridget, Bridget, is it come to this at last! And you're lavin' me—you're lavin' me! Oh, my God! what will I do—how will I live, an' what will become of me!"

On seeing Bryan, he ran to him and said, —"Oh! Bryan, to what point will I turn? —where will I get consolation?—how will I bear it? Sure, she was like a blessin' from heavén among us; ever full of peace, and charity, and goodness—the kind word an' the sweet smile to all; but to me—to me—oh! Bridget, Bridget, I'd rather die than live afther you!"

"Father, dear, your takin' it too much to heart," replied Bryan; "who knows but God may spare her to us still? But you know that even if it's His will to remove her from amongst us"—his voice here failed him for a moment—"hem—to remove her from amongst us, it's our duty to submit to it; but I hope in God she may recover still. Don't give way to sich grief till we hear what the docthor will say, at all events. How did she complain or get ill; for I think she wasn't worse when I left home?"

"It's all in her stomach," replied his father. "She was seized wid cramps in her stomach, an' she complains very much of her head; but her whole strength is gone, she can hardly spake, and she has death in her face."

At this moment his brother Michael came to them, and said—"Bryan—Bryan"—but he could proceed no farther.

"Whisht, Michael," said the other; "this is a shame; instead of supportin' and cheerin' my father, you're only doing him harm. I tell you all that you'll find there's no raison for this great grief. Be a man, Michael—"

"She has heard your voice," proceeded his brother, "and wishes to see you."

This proof of her affection for him, at the very moment when he was attempting to console others, was almost more than he could bear. Bryan knew that he himself had been her favorite son, so far as a heart overflowing with kindness and all the tender emotions that consecrate domestic life and make up its happiness, could be said to have a favorite. There was, however, that almost inperceptible partiality, which rarely made its appearance unless in some slight and inconsiderable circumstances, but which, for that very reason, was valuable in proportion to its delicacy and the caution with which it was guarded. Always indeed in some quiet and inoffensive shape was the partiality she bore him observable; and sometimes it consisted in a postponement of his wishes or comforts to those of her other children, because she felt that she might do with him that which she could not with the others—thus calculating as it were upon his greater affection. But it is wonderful to reflect in how many ways, and through what ingenious devices the human heart can exhibit its tenderness.

Arthur, as Bryan entered, had concluded the devotions he had been reading for her, and relinquished to him the chair he had occupied. On approaching, he was at once struck by the awful change for the worse, which so very brief a period had impressed upon her features. On leaving home that morning she appeared to be comparatively strong, and not further diminished in flesh than a short uneasy ailment might naturally occasion. But now her face, pallid and absolutely emaciated, had shrunk into half its size, and was, beyond all possibility of hope or doubt, stamped with the unequivocal impress of death.

Bryan, in a state which it is impossible to describe and very difficult to conceive, took her hand, and after a short glance at her features, now so full of ghastliness and the debility which had struck her down, he stooped, and, kissing her lips, burst out into wild and irrepressible sorrow.

"Bryan, dear," she said, after a pause, and when his grief had somewhat subsided, "why will you give way to this? Sure it was on you I placed my dependence—I hoped that, instead of settin' the rest an example for weakness, you'd set them one that they might and ought to follow—I sent for you, Bryan, to make it my request that, if it's the will of God to take me from among you, you might support an' console the others, an' especially your poor father; for I needn't tell you that along wid the pain I'm bearin', my heart is sore and full o' sorrow for what I know he'll suffer when I'm gone. May the Lord pity and give him strength!—for I can say on my dyin' bed that, from the first day I ever seen his face until now, he never gave me a harsh word or an unkind look, an' that you all know."

"Oh how could he, mother dear? how

could any one give you that? Who was it that ever knew you could trate you with anything but respect and affection?"

"I hope I always struv to do my duty, Bryan, towards God an' my childre', and my fellow-creatures; an' for that raison I'm not frightened at death. An', Bryan, listen to the words of your dyin' mother—"

"Oh, don't say that yet, mother," replied her son, sobbing; "don't say so yet; who knows but God will spare your life, an' that you may be many years with us still; they're all alarmed too much, I hope; but it's no wondher we should, mother dear, when there's any appearance at all of danger about *you*."

"Well, whether or not, Bryan, the advice I'm goin' to give you is never out o' saison. Live always with the fear of God in your heart; do nothing that you think will displease Him; love your fellow-creatures—serve them and relieve their wants an' distresses as far as you're able; be like your own father—kind and good to all about you, not neglectin' your religious duties. Do this, Bryan, an' then when the hour o' death comes, you'll feel a comfort an' happiness in your heart that neither the world nor anything in it can give you. You'll feel the peace of God there, an' you will die happy—happy."

Her spirit, animated by the purity and religious truth of this simple but beautiful morality, kindled into pious fervor as she proceeded, so much so indeed, that on turning her eyes towards heaven, whilst she uttered the last words, they sparkled with the mild and serene light of that simple but unconscious enthusiasm on behalf of all goodness which had characterized her whole life, and which indeed is a living principle among thousands of her humble countrywomen.

"This, dear Bryan, is the advice I gave to them all; it an' my love is the only legacy I have to lave them. An' my darlin' Dora, Bryan—oh, if you be kind and tendher to any one o' them beyant another, be so to her. My darlin' Dora! Oh! her heart's all affection, an' kindness, an' generosity. But indeed, as I said, Bryan, the task must fall to you to strengthen and console every one o' them. Ay!—an' you must begin now. You wor ever, ever, a good son; an' may God keep you in the right faith, an' may my blessin' an' His be wid you for ever! Amin."

There was a solemn and sustaining spirit in her words which strengthened Bryan, who, besides, felt anxious to accomplish to the utmost extent the affectionate purpose which had caused her to send for him.

"It's a hard task, mother darlin'," he replied; "but I'll endeavor, with God's help, to let them see that I haven't been your son for nothing; but you don't know, mother, that Kathleen's here, an' Hanna. They wish to see you, an' to get your blessin'."

"Bring them in," she replied, "an' let Dora come wid them, an' stay yourself, Bryan, becaise I'm but weak, an' I don't wish that they should stay too long. God sees its not for want of love for the other girls that I don't bid you bring them in, but that I don't wish to see them sufferin' too much sorrow; but my darlin' Dora will expect to be where Kathleen is, an' my own eyes likes to look upon her, an' upon Kathleen, too, Bryan, for I feel my heart bound to her as if she was one of ourselves, as I hope she will be."

"Oh, bless her! bless her! mother," he said, with difficulty, "an' tell her them words—say them to herself. I'll go now and bring them in."

He paused, however, for a minute or two, in order to compose his voice and features, that he might not seem to set them an example of weakness, after which he left the apartment with an appearance of greater composure than he really felt.

In a few minutes the four returned: Bryan, with Kathleen's hand locked in his, and Hanna, with her arm affectionately wreathed about Dora's neck, as if the good-hearted girl felt anxious to cherish and comfort her under the heavy calamity to which she was about to be exposed, for Dora wept bitterly. Mrs. M'Mahon signed to Hanna to approach, who, with her characteristic ardor of feeling, now burst into tears herself, and stooping down kissed her and wept aloud, whilst Dora's grief also burst out afresh.

The sick woman looked at Bryan, as if to solicit his interference, and the look was immediately understood by Kathleen as well as by himself.

"This is very wrong of you, Hanna," said her sister; "out of affection and pity to them, you ought to endeavor to act otherwise. They have enough, an' to much, to feel, without your setting them example; and, Dora dear, I thought you had more courage than you have. All this is only grieving and disturbing your mother; an' I hope that, for her sake, you'll both avoid it. I know it's hard to do so, but it's the difficulty and the trial that calls upon us to have strength, otherwise what are we better than them that we'd condemn or think little of for their own weakness."

The truth and moral force of the words, and the firmness of manner that marked Kathleen as she spoke, were immediately successful. The grief of the two girls was

at once hushed; and, after a slight pause, Mrs. M'Mahon called Kathleen to her.

"Dear Kathleen," she said, "I did hope to see the day when you'd be one of my own family, but it's not the will of God, it appears, that I should; however, may His will be done! I hope still that day *will* come, an' that your friends won't have any longer an objection to your marriage wid Bryan. I am his mother, an' no one has a better right to know his heart an' his temper, an' I can say, upon my dyin' bed, that a better heart an' a better temper never was in man. I believe, Kathleen, it was never known that a good son ever made a bad husband. However, if it's God's will to bring you together, He will, and if it isn't, you must only bear it patiently."

Bryan was silent, but his eye, from time to time, turned with a long glance of love and sorrow upon Kathleen, whose complexion became pale and red by turns. At length Dora, after her mother had concluded, went over to Kathleen, and putting her arms around her neck, exclaimed, "Oh! mother dear, something tells me that Kathleen will be my sisther yet, an' if you'd ask her to promise—"

Kathleen looked down upon the beautiful and expressive features of the affectionate girl, and gently raising her hand she placed it upon Dora's lips, in order to prevent the completion of the sentence. On doing so she received a sorrowful glance of deep and imploring entreaty from Bryan, which she returned with another that seemed to reprove him for doubting her affection, or supposing that such a promise was even necessary. "No, Dora dear," she said, "I could make no promise without the knowledge of my father and mother, or contrary to their wishes; but did you think, darling, that such a thing was necessary?" She kissed the sweet girl as she spoke, and Dora felt a tear on her cheek that was not her own.

Mrs. M'Mahon had been looking with a kind of mournful admiration upon Kathleen during this little incident, and then proceeded. "She says what is right and true; and it would be wrong, my poor child, to ask her to give such a promise. Bryan, thry an' be worthy of that girl—oh, do! an' if you ever get her, you'll have raison to thank God for one of the best gifts He ever gave to man. Hanna, come here—come to me—let me put my hand upon your head. May my blessin' and God's blessin' rest upon you for ever more. There now, be stout, acushla machree." Hanna kissed her again, but her grief was silent; and Dora, fearing she might not be able to restrain it, took her away.

"Now," proceeded the dying woman, "come to me, you Kathleen, my daughter—sure you're the daughter of my heart, as it is. Kneel down and stay with me awhile. Why does my heart warm to *you* as it never did to any one out o' my own family? Why do I love you as if you were my own child? Because I hope you will be so. Kiss me, asthore machree."

Kathleen kissed her, and for a few moments Mrs. M'Mahon felt a shower of warm tears upon her face, accompanied by a gentle and caressing pressure, that seemed to corroborate and return the hope she had just expressed. Kathleen hastily wiped away her tears, however, and once more resuming her firmness, awaited the expected blessing.

"Now, Kathleen dear, for fear any one might say that at my dyin' hour, I endeavored to take any unfair advantage of your feelings for my son, listen to me—love him as you may, and as I know you do."

"Why should I deny it?" said Kathleen, "I do love him."

"I know, darlin', you do, but for all that, go not agin the will and wishes of your parents and friends; that's my last advice to you."

She then placed her hand upon her head, and in words breathing of piety and affection, she invoked many a blessing upon her, and upon any that was dear to her in life, after which both Bryan and Kathleen left her to the rest which she now required so much.

The last hour had been an interval from pain with Mrs. M'Mahon. In the course of the day both the priest and the doctor arrived, and she appeared somewhat better. The doctor, however, prepared them for the worst, and in confirmation of his opinion, the spasms returned with dreadful violence, and in the lapse of two hours after his visit, this pious and virtuous woman, after suffering unexampled agony with a patience and fortitude that could not bes urpassed, expired in the midst of her afflicted family.

It often happens in domestic life, that in cases where long and undisturbed affection is for the first time deprived of its object by death, there supervenes upon the sorrow of many, a feeling of awful sympathy with that individual whose love for the object has been the greatest, and whose loss is of course the most irreparable. So was it with the M'Mahons. Thomas M'Mahon himself could not bear to witness the sufferings of his wife, nor to hear her moans. He accordingly left the house, and walked about the garden and farm-yard, in a state little short of actual distraction. When the last scene was over, and her actual sufferings closed for ever, the outrage of grief among his chil-

dren became almost hushed from a dread of witnessing the sufferings of their father; and for the time a great portion of their own sorrow was merged in what they felt for him. Nor was this feeling confined to themselves. His neighbors and acquaintances, on hearing of Mrs. M'Mahon's death, almost all exclaimed:—

"Oh, what will become of him? they are nothing an' will forget her soon, as is natural, well as they loved her; but poor Tom, oh! what on earth will become of *him?*"

Every eye, however, now turned toward Bryan, who was the only one of the family possessed of courage enough to undertake the task of breaking the heart-rending intelligence to their bereaved father.

"It must be done," he said, "and the sooner it's done the better; what would I give to have my darlin' Kathleen here! Her eye and her advice would give me the strength that I stand so much in need of. My God, how will I meet him, or break the sorrowful tidings to him at all! The Lord support me!"

"Ah, but Bryan," said they, "you know he looks up to whatever you say, and how much he is advised by you, if there happens to be a doubt about anything. Except her that's gone, there was no one—"

Bryan raised his hand with an expression of resolution and something like despair, in order as well as he could to intimate to them, that he wished to hear no allusion made to her whom they had lost, or that he must become incapacitated to perform the task he had to encounter, and taking his hat he proceeded to find his father, whom he met behind the garden.

It may be observed of deep grief, that whenever it is excited by the loss of what is good and virtuous, it is never a solitary passion, we mean within the circle of domestic life. So far from that, there is not a kindred affection under the influence of a virtuous heart, that is not stimulated and strengthened by its emotions. How often, for instance, have two members of the same family rushed into each other's arms, when struck by a common sense of the loss of some individual that was dear to both, because it was felt that the very fact of loving the same object had now made them dear to each other.

The father, on seeing Bryan approach, stood for a few moments and looked at him eagerly; he then approached him with a hasty and unsettled step, and said, "Bryan, Bryan, I see it in your face, she has left us, she has left us, she has left us all, an' she has left *me;* an' how am I to live without *her?* answer me that; an then give me consolation if you can."

He threw himself on his son's neck, and by a melancholy ingenuity attempted to seduce him as it were from the firmness which he appeared to preserve in the discharge of this sorrowful task, with a hope that he might countenance him in the excess of his grief—"Oh," he added, "*we* have lost her, Bryan—you and I, the two that she—that she—*Your* word was everything to her, a law to her; and she was so proud out of you—an' her eye would rest upon you smilin', as much as to say—there's my son, haven't I a right to feel proud of him, for he has never once vexed his mother's heart? nayther did you, Bryan, nayther did you, but now who will praise you as she did? who will boast of you behind your back, for she seldom did it to your face; and now that smile of love and kindness will never be on her blessed lips more. Sure you won't blame *me*, Bryan—oh, sure above all men livin', you won't blame me for feelin' her loss as I do."

The associations excited by the language of his father were such as Bryan was by no means prepared to meet. Still he concentrated all his moral power and resolution in order to accomplish the task he had undertaken, which, indeed, was not so much to announce his mother's death, as to support his father under it. After a violent effort, he at length said:—

"Are you sorry, father, because God has taken my mother to Himself? Would you wish to have her here, in pain and suffering? Do you grudge her heaven? Father, you were always a brave and strong, fearless man, but what are you now? Is this the example you are settin' to us, who ought to look up to you for support? Don't you know my mother's in heaven? Why, one would think you're sorry for it? Come, come, father, set your childre' an example now when they want it, that they can look up to—be a man, and don't forget that she's in God's Glory, Come in now, and comfort the rest."

"Ay, but when I think of what she was, Bryan; of what she was to me, Bryan, from the first day I ever called her my wife, ay, and before it, when she could get better matches, when she struggled, and waited, and fought for me, against all opposition, till her father an' mother saw her heart was fixed upon me; hould your tongue, Bryan, I'll have no one to stop my grief for her, where is she? where's my wife, I tell you? where's Bridget M'Mahon?—Bridget, where are you? have you left me, gone from me, an' must I live here widout you? must I rise in the mornin,' and neither see you nor hear you? or must I live here by myself an' never have your opinion nor advice to ask upon anything as I used to do—Bridget M'Mahon,

why did you leave me? where are you from me?"

"Here's Dora," said a sweet but broken voice; "here's Dora M'Mahon—*your own* Dora, too—and that you love bekaise I was like *her*. Oh, come with me, father, darlin'. For her sake, compose yourself and come with me. Oh, what are *we* to feel! wasn't she our mother? Wasn't she?—wasn't she? What am I sayin'? Ay, but, now—we have no mother, now!"

M'Mahon still leaned upon his son's neck, but on hearing his favorite daughter's voice, he put his arm round to where she stood, and clasping her in, brought her close to him and Bryan, so that the three individuals formed one sorrowing group together.

"Father," repeated Dora, "come with me for my mother's sake."

He started. "What's that you say, Dora? For your mother's sake? I will, darlin'—for *her* sake, I will. Ay, that's the way to manage me—for her sake. Oh, what wouldn't I do for her sake? Come, then, God bless you, darlin', for puttin' that into my head. You may make me do anything now, Dora, jewel—if you just ax it for her sake. Oh, my God! an is it come to this? An' am I talkin' this way?—but—well, for her sake, darlin'—for her sake. Come, I'll go in—but—but—oh, Bryan, how can I?"

"You know father," replied Bryan, who now held his arm, "we must all die, and it will be well for us if we can die as she died. Didn't father Peter say that if ever the light of heaven was in a human heart, it was in hers?"

"Ay, but when I go in an' look upon her, an' call Bridget, she won't answer me."

"Father dear, you are takin' it too much to heart."

"Well, it'll be the first time she ever refused to answer *me*—the first time that ever her lips will be silent when I spake to her."

"But, father," said the sweet girl at his side, "think of me. Sure I'll be your Dora more than ever, now. You know what you promised me this minute. Oh, for her sake, and for God's sake, then, don't take it so much to heart. It was my grandfather sent me to you, an' he says he want's to see you, an' to spake to you."

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "My poor father, an' he won't be long afther her. But this is the way wid all, Bryan—the way o' the world itself. We must go. I didn't care, now, how soon I followed her. Oh, no, no."

"Don't say so, father; think of the family you have; think of how you love them, and how they love you, father dear. Don't give way so much to this sorrow. I know it's hard to bid you not to do it; but you know we must strive to overcome ourselves. I hope there's happy days and years before us still. We'll have our leases soon, you know, an' then we'll feel firm and comfortable: an' you know you'll be—we'll all be near where she sleeps."

"Where she sleeps. Well, there's comfort in that, Bryan—there's comfort in that."

The old man, though very feeble, on seeing him approach, rose up and met him. "Tom," said he, "be a man, and don't shame my white hairs nor your own. I lost your mother, an' I was as fond of her, an' had as good a right, too, as ever you were of her that's now an angel in heaven; but if I lost her, I bore it as a man ought. I never yet bid you do a thing that you didn't do, but I now bid you stop cryin', an don't fly in the face o' God as you're doin'. You respect my white hairs, an' God will help you as he has done!"

The venerable appearance of the old man, the melancholy but tremulous earnestness with which he spoke, and the placid spirit of submission which touched his whole bearing with the light of an inward piety that no age could dim or overshadow, all combined to work a salutary influence upon M'Mahon. He evidently made a great effort at composure, nor without success. His grief became calm; he paid attention to other matters, and by the aid of Bryan, and from an anxiety lest he should disturb or offend his father by any further excess of sorrow, he was enabled to preserve a greater degree of composure than might have been expected.

CHAPTER XII.

Hycy Concerts a Plot and is urged to Marry.

The Hogans, who seldom missed a Wake, Dance, Cockfight or any other place of amusement or tumult, were not present, we need scarcely assure our readers, at the wake-house of Mrs. M'Mahon. On that night they and Teddy Phats were all sitting in their usual domicile, the kiln, already mentioned, expecting Hycy, when the following brief dialogue took place, previous to his appearance:

"What keeps this lad, Hycy?" said Bat; "an' a complate lad is in his coat, when he has it on him. Troth I have my doubts whether this same gentleman is to be depended on."

"Gentleman, indeed," exclaimed Philip, "nothing short of that will sarve him, shure. To be depinded on, Bat! Why, thin, its more than I'd like to say. Howanever, he's as far in, an' farther than we are."

"There's no use in our quarrelin' wid him," said Phats, in his natural manner. "If he's in our power, we're in his; an' you know he could soon make the counthry too hot to hold us. Along wid all, too, he's as revengeful as the dioule himself, if not a thrifle more so."

"If he an' Kathleen gets bothered together," said Philip, "'twould be a good look up for us, at any rate."

Kate Hogan was the only female present, the truth being that Philip and Ned were both widowers, owing, it was generally believed, to the brutal treatment which their unfortunate wives received at their hands.

"Don't quarrel wid him," said she, "if you can, at any rate, till we get him more in our power, an' that he'll be soon, maybe. If we fall out wid him, we'd have to lave the place, an' maybe to go farther than we intend, too. Wherever we went over the province, this you know was our headquarters. Here's where all belongin' to us—I mane that ever died a natural death, or drew their last breath in the counthry—rests, an' I'd not like to go far from it."

"Let what will happen," said Philip, with an oath, "I'd lose my right arm before Bryan M'Mahon puts a ring on Kathleen."

"I can tell you that Hycy has no notion of marryin' her, thin," said Kate.

"How do you know that?" asked her husband.

"I've a little bird that tells me," she replied.

"Gerald Cavanagh an' his wife doesn't think so," said Philip. "They and Jemmy Burke has the match nearly made."

"They may make the match," said Kate, "but it's more than they'll be able to do to make the marriage. Hycy's at greater game, I tell you; but whether he is or not, I tell you again that Bryan M'Mahon will have her in spite of all opposition."

"May be not," said Phats; "Hycy will take care o' that; he has him set; he'll work him a charm; he'll take care that Bryan won't be long in a fit way to offer himself as a match for her."

"More power to him in that," said Philip; "if he makes a beggarman of him he may depend on us to the back-bone."

"Have no hand in injurin' Bryan M'Mahon," said Kate. "Keep him from marryin' Kathleen if you like, or if you can; but, if you're wise, don't injure the boy."

"Why so?" asked Philip.

"That's nothing to you," she replied; "for a raison I have; and mark me, I warn you not to do so or it'll be worse for you."

"Why, who are we afraid of, barrin Hycy himself?"

"It's no matther; there's them livin' could make you afeard, an' maybe will, too, if you injure that boy."

"I'd just knock him on the head," replied the ferocious ruffian, "as soon as I would a mad dog."

"Whisht," said Phats, "here's Hycy; don't you hear his foot?"

Hycy entered in a few moments afterwards, and, after the usual greetings, sat down by the fire.

"De night's could," said Phats, resuming his brogue; "but here," he added, pulling out a bottle of whiskey, "is something to warm de blood in us. Will you thry it, Meeisther Hycy?"

"By-and-by—not now; but help yourselves."

"When did you see Miss Kathleen, Masther Hycy," asked Kate.

"You mean Miss Kathleen the Proud?" he replied—"my Lady Dignity—I have a crow to pluck with *her*."

"What crow have you to pluck wid her?" asked Kate, fiercely. "You'll pluck no crow wid *her*, or, if you do, *I'll* find a bag to hould the fedhers—mind that."

"No, no," said Philip; "whatever's to be done, she must come to no harm."

"Why, the crow I have to pluck with her, Mrs. Hogan, is—let me see—why—to—to marry her—to bind her in the bands of holy wedlock; and you know, when I do, I'm to give you all a house and place free gratis for nothing during your lives—that's what I pledge myself to do, and not a rope to hang yourselves, worthy gentlemen, as Finigan would say. I pass over the fact," he proceeded, laughing, "of the peculiar intimacy which, on a certain occasion, was established between Jemmy, the gentleman's old oak drawers, and your wrenching-irons; however, that is not the matter at present, and I am somewhat in a hurry."

"You heard," said Bat, "that Bryan M'Mahon has lost his mother?"

"I did," said the other; "poor orphan lad, I pity him."

"We know you do," said Bat, with a vindictive but approving sneer.

"I assure you," continued Hycy, "I wish the young man well."

"Durin' der lives," repeated Phats, who had evidently been pondering over Hycy's promised gift to the Hogans;—"throth," he observed with a grin, "dere may be something under dat too. Ay! an' she wishes Bryan M'Mahon well," he exclaimed, raising his red eyebrows.

"Shiss," replied Hycy, mimicking him, "her does."

"But you must have de still-house nowhere but in Ahadarra for alls dat."

"For alls dats," replied the other.

"Dat will do den," said Phats, composedly.

"Enough of this," said Hycy. "Now, Phats, have you examined and pitched upon the place?"

"Well, then," replied Phats, speaking in his natural manner, "I have; an' a betther spot isn't in Europe than there is undher the hip of Cullamore. But do you know how Roger Cooke sarved Adam Blakely of Glencuil?"

"Perfectly well," replied Hycy, "he ruined him."

"But we don't know it," said Ned; "how was it, Teddy?"

"Why, he set up a still on his property—an' you know Adam owns the whole townland, jist as Bryan M'Mahon does Ahadarra—an' afther three or four runnin she gets a bloody scoundrel to inform upon Adam, as if it was him an' not himself that had the still. Clinton the gauger—may the devil break his neck at any rate!—an' the redcoats—came and found all right, Still, Head, and Worm."

"Well," said Bat, "an' how did that ruin him?"

"Why, by the present law," returned Phats, "it's the townland that must pay the fine. Poor Adam wasn't to say very rich; he had to pay the fine, however, and now he's a beggar—root an' branch, chick an' child out of it. Do *you* undherstand that, Misther Hycy?"

"No," replied Hycy, "you're mistaken; I have recourse to the still, because I want cash. Honest Jemmy the gentleman has taken the *sthad* an' won't fork out any longer, so that I must either *run* a cast or two every now an' then, or turn clodhopper like himself. So much I say for your information, Mr. Phats. In the meantime let us see what's to be done. Here, Ned, is a five-pound note to buy barley; keep a strict account of this; for I do assure you that I am not a person to be played on. There's another thirty-shilling note—or stay, I'll make it two pounds—to enable you to box up the still-house and remove the vessels and things from Glendearg. Have you all ready, Philip?" he said, addressing himself to Hogan.

"All," replied Philip; "sich a Still, Head, and Worm, you'd not find in Europe—ready to be set to work at a minute's notice."

"When," said Hycy, rising, "will it be necessary that I should see you again?"

"We'll let you know," replied Phats, "when we want you. Kate here can drop in, as if by accident, an' give the *hand word*."

"Well, then, good-night—stay, give me a glass of whiskey before I go; and, before I *do* go, listen. You know the confidence I place in every one of you on this occasion?"

"We do," replied Philip; "no doubt of it."

"Listen, I say. I swear by all that a man can swear by, that if a soul of you ever breathes—I hope, by the way, that these young savages are all asleep——"

"As sound as a top," said Bat, "every one o' them."

"Well, if a single one of you ever breathes my name or mentions me to a human being as in any way connected, directly or indirectly, with the business in which we are engaged, I'll make the country too hot to hold you—and you need no ghost to tell you how easily I could dispose of you if it went to that."

Kate, when he had repeated these words, gave him a peculiar glance, which was accompanied by a short abrupt laugh that seemed to have something derisive in it.

"Is there anything to be laughed at in what I am saying, most amiable Mrs. Hogan?" he asked.

Kate gave either a feigned or a real start as he spoke.

"Laughed at!" she exclaimed, as if surprised; "throth I wasn't thinkin' of you at all, Mr. Hycy. What wor you sayin'?"

"That if my name ever happens to be mentioned in connection with this business, I'll send the whole kit of you—hammers, budgets, and sothering-irons—to hell or Connaught; so think of this now, and good-night."

"There goes as d——d a vagabond," said Ned, "as ever stretched hemp; and only that it's our own business to make the most use we can out of him, I didn't care the devil had him, for I don't like a bone in his skin."

"Why," said Philip, "I see what he's at now. Sure enough he'll put the copin'-stone on Bryan M'Mahon at any rate—that, an' if we can get the house and place out of him—an' what need we care?"

"Send us to hell or Connaught," said Kate; "well, that's not bad—ha! ha! ha!"

"What are you neigherin' at?" said her husband; "and what set you a-cacklin' to his face a while ago?"

She shook her head carelessly. "No matther," she replied, "for a raison I had."

"Would you let me know your raison, if you plaise?"

"If I plaise—ay, you did well to put that in, for I don't plaise to let you know any more about it. I laughed bekaise I liked to laugh; an' I hope one may do that 'ithout being brought over the coals about it. Go to bed, an' give me another glass o' whiskey, Ted—it always makes me sleep."

Ted had been for some minutes evidently ruminating.

"He is a good boy," said he; "but at any rate our hands is in the lion's mouth, an' its not our policy to vex him."

Hycy, on his way home, felt himself in better spirits than he had been in for some time. The arrangement with young Clinton gave him considerable satisfaction, and he now resolved to lose as little time as possible in executing his own part of the contract. Clinton himself, who was a thoughtless young fellow, fond of pleasure, and with no great relish for business, was guided almost in everything by his knowing old uncle the gauger, on whom he and his sister depended, and who looked upon him as unfit for any kind of employment unless the management of a cheap farm, such as would necessarily draw his attention from habits of idleness and expense to those of application and industry. Being aware, from common report, that M'Mahon's extensive and improvable holding in Ahadarra was out of lease, he immediately set his heart upon it, but knew not exactly in what manner to accomplish his designs, in securing it if he could, without exposing himself to suspicion and a good deal of obloquy besides. Old Clinton was one of those sheer and hardened sinners who, without either scruple or remorse, yet think it worth while to keep as good terms with the world as they can, whilst at the same time they laugh and despise in their hearts all that is worthy of honor and respect in it. His nephew, however, had some positive good, and not a little of that light and reckless profligacy which is often mistaken for heart and spirit. Hycy and he, though not very long acquainted, were, at the present period of our narrative, on very intimate terms. They had, it is true, a good many propensities in common, and these were what constituted the bond between them. They were companions but not friends; and Clinton saw many things in Hycy which disgusted him exceedingly, and scarcely anything more than the contemptuous manner in which he spoke of and treated his parents. He liked his society, because he was lively and without any of that high and honorable moral feeling which is often troublesome to a companion who, like Clinton, was not possessed of much scruple while engaged in the pursuit of pleasures. On this account, therefore, we say that he relished his society, but could neither respect nor esteem him.

On the following morning at breakfast, his uncle asked him where he had dined the day before.

"With Hycy Burke, sir," replied the nephew.

"Yes; that is honest Jemmy's son—a very great man in his own conceit, Harry. You seem to like him very much."

Harry felt a good deal puzzled as to the nature of his reply. He knew very well that his uncle did not relish Hycy, and he felt that he could not exactly state his opinion of him without bringing in question his own penetration and good taste in keeping his society. Then, with respect to his sister, although he had no earthly intention of seeing her the wife of such a person, still he resolved to be able to say to Hycy that he had not broken his word, a consideration which would not have bound Hycy one moment under the same circumstances.

"He's a very pleasant young fellow, sir," replied the other, "and has been exceedingly civil and attentive to me."

"Ay!—do you like him—do you esteem him, I mean?"

"I dare say I will, sir, when I come to know him better."

"Which is as much as to say that at present you do not. So I thought. You have a portion of good sense about you, but in a thousand things you're a jackass, Harry."

"Thank you, sir," replied his nephew, laughing heartily; "thank you for the compliment. I am *your* nephew, you know."

"You have a parcel of d——d scruples, I say, that are ridiculous. What the devil need a man care about in this world but appearances? Mind your own interests, keep up appearances, and you have done your duty."

"But I should like to do a little more than keep up appearances," replied his nephew.

"I know you would," said his uncle, "and it is for that especial reason that I say you're carrying the ears. I'm now a long time in the world, Masther Harry—sixty-two years—although I don't look it, nor anything like it, and in the course of that time—or, at all events, ever since I was able to form my own opinions, I never met a man that wasn't a rogue in something, with the exception of—let me see—one—two—three—four—five—I'm not able to make out the half-dozen."

"And who were the five honorable exceptions?" asked his niece, smiling.

"They were the five fools of the parish, Maria—and yet I am wrong, still—for Bob M'Cann was as thievish as the very devil whenever he had an opportunity. And now, do you know the conclusion I come to from all this?"

"I suppose," said his niece, "that no man's honest but a fool."

"Thank you, Maria. Well done—you've hit it. By the way, it's seems M'Mahon's wife, of Carriglass, is dead."

"Is she?" said Harry; "that is a respectable family, father, by all accounts."

"Why, they neither rob nor steal, I believe," replied his uncle. "They are like most people, I suppose, honest in the eye of the law—honest because the laws keep them so."

"I did not think your opinion of the world was so bad, uncle," said Maria; "I hope it is not so bad as you say it is."

"All I can say, then," replied the old Cynic, "that if you wait till you find an honest man for your husband, you'll die an old maid."

"Well, but excuse me, uncle, is that safe doctrine to lay down before your nephew, or myself?"

"Pooh, as to you, you silly girl, what have you to do with it? We're talkin' about men, now—about the world, I say, and life in general."

"And don't you wish Harry to be honest?"

"Yes, where it is his interest; and ditto to roguery, where it can be done safely."

"I know you don't feel what you say, uncle," she observed, "nor believe it either."

"Not he, Maria," said her brother, awakening out of a reverie; "but, uncle, as to Hycy Burke—I don't—hem."

"You don't what?" asked the other, rising and staring at him.

His nephew looked at his sister, and was silent.

"You don't mean what, man?—always speak out. Here, help me on with this coat. Fethertonge and I are taking a ride up tomorrow as far as Ahadarra."

"That's a man I don't like," said the nephew. "He's too soft and too sweet, and speaks too low to be honest."

"Honest, you blockhead! Who says he's honest?" replied his uncle. "He's as good a thing, however, an excellent man of the world that looks to the main point, and—keeps up appearances. Take care of yourselves;" and with these words, accompanied with a shrewd, knavish nod that was peculiar to him, in giving which with expression he was a perfect adept, he left them.

When he was gone, the brother and his sister looked at each other, and the latter said, "Can it be possible, Harry, that my uncle is serious in all he says on this subject?"

Her brother, who paid more regard to the principles of his sister than her uncle did, felt great reluctance in answering her in the affirmative, so much so, indeed, that he resolved to stretch a little for the sake of common decency.

"Not at all, Maria; no man relishes honesty more than he does. He only speaks in this fashion because he thinks that honest men are scarce, and so they are. But, by-the-way, talking about Hycy Burke, Maria, how do *you* like him?"

"I can't say I admire him," she replied, "but you know I have had very slight opportunities of forming any opinion."

"From what you have seen of him, what do you think?"

"Let me see," she replied, pausing; "why, that he'll meet very few who will think so highly of him as he does of himself."

"He thinks very highly of you, then."

"How do you know that?" she asked somewhat quickly.

"Faith, Maria, from the best authority—because he himself told me so."

"So, then, I have had the honor of furnishing you with a topic of conversation?"

"Unquestionably, and you may prepare yourself for a surprise. He's attached to you."

"I think not," she replied calmly.

"Why so?" he asked.

"Because, if you wish to know the truth, I do not think him capable of attachment to any one but himself."

"Faith, a very good reason, Maria; but, seriously, if he should introduce the subject, I trust, at all events, that you will treat him with respect."

"I shall certainly respect myself, Harry. He need not fear that I shall read him one of my uncle's lectures upon life and honesty."

"I have promised not to be his enemy in the matter, and I shall keep my word."

"So you may, Harry, with perfect safety. I am much obliged to him for his good opinion; but"—she paused.

"What do you stop at, Maria?"

"I was only about to add," she replied, "that I wish it was mutual."

"You wish it," he exclaimed. "What do you mean by that, Maria?"

She laughed. "Don't you know it is only a form of speech? a polite way of saying that he does not rank high in my esteem?"

"Well, well," he replied, "settle that matter between you; perhaps the devil is not so black as he's painted."

"A very unhappy illustration," said his sister, "whatever has put it into your head."

"Faith, and I don't know what put it there. However, all I can say in the matter I have already said. I am not, nor shall I be, his enemy. I'll trouble you, as you're near it, to touch the bell till George gets the horse. I am going up to his father's, now. Shall I tell him that John Wallace is

discarded; that he will be received with smiles, and that—"

"How can you be so foolish, Harry?"

"Well, good-bye, at any rate. You are perfectly capable of deciding for yourself, Maria."

"I trust so," she replied. "There's George with your horse now."

"It's a blue look-up, Master Hycy," said Clinton to himself as he took his way to Burke's. "I think you have but little chance in that quarter, oh, most accomplished Hycy, and indeed I am not a whit sorry; but should be very much so were it otherwise."

It is singular enough that whilst Clinton was introducing the subject of Hycy's attachment to his sister, that worthy young gentleman was sustaining a much more serious and vehement onset upon a similar subject at home. Gerald Cavanagh and his wife having once got the notion of a marriage between Kathleen and Hycy into their heads, were determined not to rest until that desirable consummation should be brought about. In accordance with this resolution, we must assure our readers that Gerald never omitted any opportunity of introducing the matter to Jemmy Burke, who, as he liked the Cavanaghs, and especially Kathleen herself, who, indeed, was a general favorite, began to think that, although in point of circumstances she was by no means a match for him, Hycy might do still worse. It is true, his wife was outrageous at the bare mention of it; but Jemmy, along with a good deal of blunt sarcasm, had a resolution of his own, and not unfrequently took a kind of good-natured and shrewd delight in opposing her wishes whenever he found them to be unreasonable. For several months past he could not put his foot out of the door that he was not haunted by honest Gerald Cavanagh, who had only one idea constantly before him, that of raising his daughter to the rank and state in which he knew, or at least calculated that Hycy Burke would keep her. Go where he might, honest Jemmy was attended by honest Gerald, like his *fetch*. At mass, at market, in every fair throughout the country was Cavanagh sure to bring up the subject of the marriage; and what was the best of it, he and his neighbor drank each other's healths so repeatedly on the head of it, that they often separated in a state that might be termed anything but sober. Nay, what is more, it was a fact that they had more than once or twice absolutely arranged the whole matter, and even appointed the day for the wedding, without either of them being able to recollect the circumstances on the following morning.

Whilst at breakfast on the morning in question, Burke, after finishing his first cup of tea, addressed his worthy son as follows:—

"Hycy, do you intend to live always this way?"

"Certainly not, Mr. Burke. I expect to dine on something more substantial than tea."

"You're very stupid, Hycy, not to understand me; but, indeed, you never were overstocked wid brains, unfortunately, as I know to my cost—but what I mane is, have you any intention of changing your condition in life? Do you intend to marry, or to go on spendin' money upon me at this rate!"

"The old lecture, Mrs. Burke," said Hycy, addressing his mother. "Father, you are sadly deficient in originality. Of late you are perpetually repeating yourself. Why, I suppose to-morrow or next day, you will become geometrical on our hands, or treat us to a grammatical praxis. Don't you think it very likely, Mrs. Burke!"

"And if he does," replied his mother, "it's not the first time he has been guilty of both; but of late, all the little shame he had, he has lost it."

"Faith, and if I hadn't got a large stock, I'd a been run out of it this many a day, in regard of what I had to lose in that way for you, Hycy. However, I'll thank you to listen to me. Have you any intention of marryin' a wife?"

"Unquestionably, Mr. Burke. Not a doubt of it."

"Well, I am glad to hear it. The sooner you're married, the sooner you'll settle down. You'll know, then, my lad, what life is."

Honest Jemmy's sarcasm was likely to carry him too far from his purpose, which was certainly not to give a malicious account of matrimony, but, on the contrary, to recommend it to his worthy son.

"Well, Mr. Burke," said Hycy, winking at his mother, "proceed."

"The truth is, Hycy," he added, "I have a wife in my eye for you."

"I thought as much," replied the other. "I did imagine it was there you had her; name—Mr. Burke—name?"

"Troth, I'm ashamed, Hycy, to name her and yourself on the same day."

"Well, can't you name her to-day, and postpone me until to-morrow?"

"It would be almost a pity to have her thrown away upon you. A good and virtuous wife, however, may do a great deal to reclaim a bad husband, and, indeed, you wouldn't be the first profligate that was reformed in the same way."

"Many thanks, Mr. Burke; you are quite geological this morning; isn't he, ma'am?"

"When was he ever anything else? God pardon him! However, I know what he's exterminatin' for; he wants you to marry Kathleen Cavanagh."

"Ay do I, Rosha; and she might make him a respectable man yet,—that is, if any woman could."

"Geological again, mother; well, really now, Katsey Cavanagh is a splendid girl, a fine animal, no doubt of it; all her points are good, but, at the same time, Mr. Burke, a trifle too blebeian for Hycy the accomplished."

"I tell you she's a devilish sight too good for you; and if you don't marry her, you'll never get such a wife."

"Troth," answered Mrs. Burke, "I think myself there's something over you, or you wouldn't spake as you do—a wife for Hycy—one of Gerald Cavanagh's daughters make a wife for *him!*—not while I'm alive at any rate, plaise God."

"While you're alive; well, may be not:—but sure if it plases God to bring it about, on your own plan, I must endaivor to be contented, Rosha; ay, an' how do you know but I'd dance at their weddin' too! ha! ha! ha!"

"Oh, then, it's you that's the bitther pill, Jemmy Burke! but, thank God, I disregard you at all events. It's little respect you pay to my feelings, or ever did."

"I trust, my most amiable mother, that you won't suffer the equability of your temper to be disturbed by anything proceeding from such an antiphlogistic source. Allow me to say, Mr. Burke, that I have higher game in view, and that for the present I must beg respectfully to decline the proposal which you so kindly made, fully sensible as I am of the honor you intended for me. If you will only exercise a little patience, however, perhaps I shall have the pleasure ere long of presenting to you a lady of high accomplishments, amiable manners, and very considerable beauty."

"Not a 'Crazy Jane' bargain, I hope?"

"Really, Mr. Burke, you are pleased to be sarcastic; but as for honest Katsey, have the goodness to take her out of your eye as soon as possible, for she only blinds you to your own interest and to mine."

"You wouldn't marry Kathleen, then?"

"For the present I say most assuredly not," replied the son, in the same ironical and polite tone.

"Because," continued his father, with a very grave smile, in which there was, to say truth, a good deal of the grin visible, "as poor Gerald was a good deal anxious about the matther, I said I'd try and make you marry her—*to oblige him.*"

Hycy almost, if not altogether, lost his equanimity by the contemptuous sarcasm implied in these words. "Father," said he, to save trouble, and to prevent you and me both from thrashing the wind in this manner, I think it right to tell you that I have no notion of marrying such a girl as Cavanagh's daughter."

"No," continued his mother, "nor if you had, I wouldn't suffer it."

"Very well," said the father; "is that your mind?"

"That's my mind, sir."

"Well, now, listen to mine, and maybe, Hycy, I'll taiche you better manners and more respect for your father; suppose I bring your brother home from school,—suppose I breed him up an honest famer,—and suppose I give him all my property, and lave Mr. Gentleman Hycy to lead a gentleman's life on his own means, the best way he can. There now is something for you to suppose, and so I must go to my men."

He took up his hat as he spoke and went out to the fields, leaving both mother and son in no slight degree startled by an intimation so utterly unexpected, but which they knew enough of him to believe was one not at all unlikely to be acted on by a man who so frequently followed up his own determinations with a spirit amounting almost to obstinacy.

"I think, mother," observed the latter, "we must take in sail a little; 'the gentleman' won't hear the ironical to such an extent, although he is master of it in his own way; in other words, Mr. Burke won't bear to be laughed at."

"Not he," said his mother, in the tone of one who was half angry at him on that very account, "he'll bear nothing."

"D—n it, to tell that vulgar bumpkin, Cavanagh, I suppose in a state of maudlin drunkenness, that he would make me marry his daughter—*to oblige him!*—contempt could go no further; it was making a complete cipher of me."

"Ay, but I'm disturbed about what he said going out, Hycy. I don't half like the face he had on him when he said it; and when he comes to discover other things, too, money matthers—there will be no keepin' the house wid him."

"I fear as much," said Hycy; "however, we must only play our cards as well as we can; he is an impracticable man, no doubt of it, and it is a sad thing that a young fellow of spirit should be depending on such a—

> "'Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
> How can you bloom so fresh and fair,
> How can ye chant, ye little birds,
> And I sae weary fu' o' care, &c., &c.'

"Well, well—I do not relish that last hint certainly, and if other projects should fail,

why, as touching the fair Katsey, it might not be impossible that—however, time will develop. She is a fine girl, a magnificent creature, no doubt of it, still, most maternal relative, as I said, time will develop—by the way, Mrs. M'Mahon, the clodhopper's mother, is to be interred to-morrow, and I suppose you and 'the gentleman' will attend the funeral."

"Sartinly, we must."

"So shall 'the accomplished.' Clinton and I shall honor that lugubrious ceremony with out presence; but as respecting the clodhopper himself, meaning thereby Bryan of Ahadarra, he is provided for. What an unlucky thought to enter into the old fellow's noddle! However, *non constat*, as Finigan would say, time will develop."

"You're not gainin' ground with him at all events," said his mother; "ever since that Crazy Jane affair he's changed for the worse towards both of us, or ever since the robbery I ought to say, for he's dark and has something on his mind ever since."

"I'm in the dark there myself, most amiable of mothers; however, as I said just now, I say time will develop."

He then began to prepare himself for the business of the day, which consisted principally in riding about seeking out new adventures, or, as they term it, hunting in couples, with Harry Clinton.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mrs. M'Mahon's Funeral.

On the morning of Mrs. M'Mahon's funeral, the house as is usual in such cases, was filled with relatives and neighbors, each and all anxious to soothe and give comfort to the afflicted family. Protesants and Presbyterians were there, who entered as deeply and affectionately into the sorrow which was felt as if they were connected to them by blood. Moving about with something like authority, was Dennis O'Grady, the Roman Catholic Parish Clerk, who, with a semi-clerical bearing, undertook to direct the religious devotions which are usual on such occasions. In consequence of the dearth of schools and teachers that then existed in our unfortunate country, it frequently happened, that persons were, from necessity, engaged in aiding the performance of religious duties, who were possessed of very little education, if not, as was too often the case, absolutely and wholly illiterate. Dennis was not absolutely illiterate, but, in good truth, he was by no means far removed from that uncomfortable category. Finigan, the schoolmaster, was also present; and as he claimed acquaintance with the classics, and could understand and read with something like correctness the Latin offices, which were frequently repeated on these occasions it would be utterly impossible to describe the lofty scorn and haughty supercilious contempt with which he contemplated poor Dennis, who kept muttering away at the *Confiteor* and *De Profundis* with a barbarity of pronunciation that rendered it impossible for human ears to understand a single word he said. Finigan, swollen with an indignation which he could no longer suppress, and stimulated by a glass or two of whiskey, took three or four of the neighbors over to a corner, where, whilst his eyes rested on Dennis with a most withering expression of scorn, he exclaimed—"Here, hand me that manual, and get out o' my way, you illiterate nonentity and most unsufferable appendage to religion."

He then took the book, and going over to the coffin, read in a loud and sonorous voice the *De Profundis* and other prayers for the dead, casting his eyes from time to time upon the unfortunate clerk with a contemptuous bitterness and scorn that, for force of expression, could not be surpassed. When he had concluded, he looked around him with a sense of lofty triumph that was irresistible in its way. "There," said he, "is something like accent and quantity for you—there is something that may, without derogation to religion, be called respectable perusal—an' yet to say that a man like me, wid classical accomplishments and propensities from my very cradle, should be set aside for that illiterate vulgarian, merely because, like every other janius, I sometimes indulge in the delectable enjoyment of a copious libation, is too bad."

This in fact was the *gist* of his resentment against O'Grady. He had been in the habit for some time of acting as clerk to the priest, who bore with his "copious libations," as he called them, until common decency rendered it impossible to allow him any longer the privilege of taking a part as clerk in the ceremonies of religion.

When this was over, a rustic choir, whom the parish clerk had organized, and in a great measure taught himself, approached the body and sang a hymn over it, after which the preparations for its removal began to be made.

Ever since the death of his wife, Thomas M'Mahon could not be prevailed upon to taste a morsel of food. He went about from place to place, marked by such evidences of utter prostration and despair that it was painful to look upon him, especially when

one considered the truth, purity, and fervor of the affection that had subsisted between him and the inestimable woman he had lost. The only two individuals capable of exercising any influence upon him now were Bryan and his daughter Dora; yet even they could not prevail upon him to take any sustenance. His face was haggard and pale as death, his eyes red and bloodshot, and his very body, which had always been erect and manly, was now stooped and bent from the very intensity of his affliction.

He had been about the garden during the scene just described, and from the garden he passed round through all the office-houses, into every one of which he entered, looking at them in the stupid bereavement of grief, as if he had only noticed them for the first time. On going into the cow-house where the animals were at their food, he approached one of them—that which had been his wife's favorite, and which would suffer no hand to milk her but her own—"Oh, Bracky," he said, "little you know who's gone from you—even you miss her already, for you refused for the last three days to let any one of them milk you, when she was not here to do it. Ah, Bracky, the kind hand and the kind word that you liked so well will never be wid you more—that low sweet song that you loved to listen to, and that made you turn round while she was milkin' you, an' lick her wid your tongue from pure affection—for what was there that had life that didn't love her? That low, sweet song, Bracky, you will never hear again. Well, Bracky, for her sake I'm come to tell you, this sorrowful mornin', that while I have life an' the means of keepin' you, from me an' them she loved you will never part."

While he spoke the poor animal, feeling from the habit of instinct that the hour of milking had arrived, turned round and uttered once or twice that affectionate lowing with which she usually called upon the departed to come and relieve her of her fragrant burthen. This was more than the heart-broken man could bear, he walked back, and entering the wake-house, in a burst of vehement sorrow—"Oh, Bridget, my wife, my wife—is it any wondher *we* should feel your loss, when your favorite, Bracky, is callin' for you; but you won't come to her—that voice that so often charmed her will never charm the poor affectionate creature again."

"Father dear," said Bryan, "if ever you were called upon to be a man it is now."

"But, Byran, as God is to judge me," replied his father, "the cow—her own cow—is callin' for her in the cow-house widin—its truth—doesn't everything miss her—even poor Bracky feels as if she was dasarted. Oh, my God, an' what will we do—what will *I* do!"

This anecdote told by the sorrowing husband was indeed inexpressingly affecting. Bryan, who had collected all his firmness with a hope of being able to sustain his father, was so much overpowered by this circumstance that, after two or three ineffectual attempts to soothe him, he was himself fairly overcome, and yielded for the moment to bitter tears, whilst the whole family broke out into one general outburst of sorrow, accompanied in many cases by the spectators, who were not proof against the influence of so natural and touching an incident.

Their neighbors and friends, in the meantime, were pouring in fast from all directions. Jemmy Burke and his wife—the latter ridiculously over-dressed—drove there upon their jaunting-car, which was considered a great compliment, followed soon afterwards by Hycy and Harry Clinton on horse-back. Gerald Cavanagh and his family also came, with the exception of Kathleen and Hanna, who were, however, every moment expected. The schoolmaster having finished the *De Profundis*, was, as is usual, treated to a glass of whiskey—a circumstance which just advanced him to such a degree of fluency and easy assurance as was necessary properly to develop the peculiarities of his character. Having witnessed Bryan's failure at consolation, attended as it was by the clamorous grief of the family, he deemed it his duty, especially as he had just taken some part in the devotions, to undertake the task in which Bryan had been so unsuccessful.

"Thomas M'Mahon," said he, "I'm disposed to blush—do you hear me, I say? I am disposed to blush, I repate, for your want of—he doesn't hear me:—will you pay attention? I am really disposed to blush"—and as he uttered the words he stirred M'Mahon by shaking his shoulders two or three times, in order to gain his attention.

"Are you?" replied the other, replying in an absent manner to his words. "God help you then, and assist you, for it's few can do it."

"Can do what?"

"Och, I don't know; whatever you wor sayin'."

"Patience, my good friend, Thomas M'Mahon. I would call you Tom familiarly, but that you are in affliction, and it is well known that every one in affliction is, or at least ought to be, treated with respect and much sympathetical consolation. You are now in deep sorrow; but don't you knows that death is the end of all things? and believe

me there are many objects in this world which a wise and experienced man would lose wid much greater regret than he would a mere wife. Think, for instance, how many men there are—dreary and subdued creatures—who dare not call their souls, if they have any, or anything else they do possess, their own; think, I repate, of those who would give nine-tenths of all they are worth simply to be in your present condition! Wretches who from the moment they passed under the yoke matrimonial, to which all other yokes are jokes, have often heard of liberty but never enjoyed it for one single hour—the Lord help them!"

"Amen!" exclaimed M'Mahon, unconsciously.

"Yes," proceeded Finigan, "unfortunate devils whose obstinacy has been streaked by a black mark, or which ought rather to be termed a black and blue mark, for that is an abler and more significant illustration, Poor quadrupeds who have lived their whole miserable lives as married men under an iron dynasty; and who know that the thunderings of Jupiter himself, if he were now in vogue, would be mere music compared to the fury of a conjugal tongue when agitated by any one of the thousand causes that set it a-going so easily. Now, Thomas, I am far from insinuating that ever you stood in that most pitiable category, but I know many who have—heigho!—and I know many who do, and some besides who will; for what was before may be agin, and it will be nothing but ascendancy armed with her iron rod on the one hand, against patience, submission, and tribulation, wid their groans and penances on the other. Courage then, my worthy friend; do not be overwhelmed wid grief, for I can assure you that as matters in general go on the surface of this terraqueous globe, the death of a wife ought to be set down as a proof that heaven does not altogether overlook us. 'Tis true there are tears shed upon such occasions, and for very secret reason's too, if the truth were known. Joy has its tears as well as grief, I believe, and it is often rather difficult, under a blessing so completely disguised as the death of a wi—of one's matrimonial partner, to restrain them. Come then, be a man. There is Mr. Hycy Burke, a tender-hearted young gentleman, and if you go on this way you will have him weeping for sheer sympathy, not pretermitting Mr. Clinton, his companion, who is equally inclined to be pathetic, if one can judge from apparent symptons."

"I'm obliged to you, Masther," replied M'Mahon, who had not heard, or rather paid attention to, a single syllable he had uttered. "Of course it's thruth you're sayin'—it is—it is, *fureer gair* it is; and she that's gone from me is a proof of it. What wondher then that I should shed tears, and feel as I do?"

The unconscious simplicity of this reply to such a singular argument for consolation as the schoolmaster had advanced, caused many to smile, some to laugh outright, and others to sympathize still more deeply with M'Mahon's sorrow. Finigan's allusion to Hycy and his companion was justified by the contrast which the appearance of each presented. Hycy, who enjoyed his lecture on the tribulations of matrimonial life very much, laughed as he advanced in it, whilst Clinton, who was really absorbed in a contemplation of the profound and solemn spirit which marked the character of the grief he witnessed, and who felt impressed besides by the touching emblems of death and bereavement which surrounded him, gradually gave way to the impressions that gained on him, until he almost felt the tears in his eyes.

At this moment Kathleen and her sister Hanna entered the house, and a general stir took place among those who were present, which was caused by her strikingly noble figure and extraordinary beauty—a beauty which, on the occasion in question, assumed a peculiarly dignified and majestic character from the deep and earnest sympathy with the surrounding sorrow that was impressed on it.

Hycy and his companion surveyed her for many minutes; and the former began to think that after all, if Miss Clinton should fail him, Kathleen would make an admirable and most lovely wife. Her father soon after she entered came over, and taking her hand said, "Come with me, Kathleen, till you shake hands wid a great friend of yours—wid Misther Burke. This is herself, Misther Burke," he added, significantly, on putting her hand into that of honest Jemmy, "an' I think no father need be ashamed of her."

"Nor no father-in-law," replied Jemmy, shaking her cordially by the hand, "and whisper, darlin'," said he, putting his mouth close to her ear, and speaking so as that he might not be heard by others, "I hope to see you my daughter-in-law yet, if I could only get that boy beyant to make himself worthy of you."

On speaking he turned his eyes on Hycy, who raised himself up, and assuming his best looks intimated his consciousness of being the object of his father's allusion to him. He then stepped over to where she stood, and extending his hand with an air of gallantry and good humor said, "I hope Miss Cavanagh, who has so far honored our

worthy father, won't refuse to honor the son."

Kathleen, who had blushed at his father's words, now blushed more deeply still; because in this instance, there was added to the blush of modesty that of offended pride at his unseasonable presumption.

"This, Mr. Hycy," she replied, "is neither a time nor a place for empty compliments. When the son becomes as worthy as the father, I'll shake hands with him; but not till that time comes."

On returning to the place she had left, her eyes met those of Bryan, and for a period that estimable and true-hearted young fellow forgot both grief and sorrow in the rush of rapturous love which poured its unalloyed sense of happiness into his heart. Hycy, however, felt mortified, and bit his lip with vexation. To a young man possessed of excessive vanity, the repulse was the more humiliating in proportion to its publicity. Gerald Cavanagh was as deeply offended as Hycy, and his wife could not help exclaiming aloud, "Kathleen! what do you mane? declare I'm ashamed of you!"

Kathleen, however, sat down beside her and the matter was soon forgotten in the bustle and bustle which preceded the setting out of the funeral.

This was indeed a trying and heart-rending scene. The faithful wife, the virtuous mother, the kind friend, and the pious Christian, was now about to be removed for ever from that domestic scene which her fidelity, her virtue, her charity, and her piety, had filled with peace, and love, and happiness. As the coffin, which had been resting upon two chairs, was about to be removed, the grief of her family became loud and vehement.

"Oh, Bridget!" exclaimed her husband, "and is it to come to this at last! And you are lavin' us for evermore! Don't raise the coffin," he proceeded, "don't raise it. Oh! let us not part wid her till to-morrow; let us know that she's undher the same roof wid us until then. An', merciful Father, when I think where you're goin' to bring her to! Oh! there lies the heart now widout one motion—dead and cowld—the heart that loved us all as no other heart ever did! Bridget, my wife, don't you hear me? But the day was that you'd hear me, an' that your kind an' lovin' eye would turn on me wid that smile that was never broken. Where is the wife that was true? Where is the lovin' mother, the charitable heart to the poor and desolate, and the hand that was ever ready to aid them that was in distress? Where are they all now? There, dead and cowld forever, in that coffin. What has become of my wife, I say? What *is* death at all, to take all we love from us this way? But sure God forgive me for saying so, for isn't it the will of God? but oh! it is the heaviest of all thrials to lose such a woman as she was!"

Old grandfather, as he was called, had latterly become very feeble, and was barely able to be out of bed on that occasion. When the tumult reached the room where he sat with some of the aged neighbors, he inquired what had occasioned it, and being told that the coffin was about to be removed to the hearse, he rose up.

"That is Tom's voice I hear," said he, "and I must put an end to this." He accordingly made his appearance rather unexpectedly among them, and approaching his son, said, putting his hand commandingly upon his shoulder, and looking in his face with a solemn consciousness of authority that was irresistible, "I command you, Tom, to stop. It's not many commands that I'll ever give you—maybe this will be the last—and it's not many ever I had occasion to give you, but now I command you to stop and let the funeral go on." He paused for a short time and looked upon the features of his son with a full sense of what was due to his authority. His great age, his white hairs, his venerable looks and bearing, and the reverence which the tremulous but earnest tones of his voice were calculated to inspire, filled his son with awe, and he was silent.

"Father," said he, "I will; I'll try and obey you—I will."

"God bless you and comfort you, my dear son," said the old man. "Keep silence, now," he proceeded, addressing the others, "and bring the coffin to the hearse at wanst. And may God strengthen and support you all, for it's I that knows your loss; but like a good mother as she was, she has left none but good and dutiful childre' behind her."

Poor Dora, during the whole morning, had imposed a task upon herself that was greater than her affectionate and sorrowing heart could bear. She was very pale and exhausted by the force of what she had felt, and her excessive weeping; but it was observed that she now appeared to manifest a greater degree of fortitude than any of the rest. Still, during this assumed calmness, the dear girl, every now and then, could not help uttering a short convulsive sob, that indicated at once her physicial debility and extraordinary grief. She was evidently incapable of entering into conversation, or at least, averse to it, and was consequently very silent during the whole morning. As they stooped, however, to remove the coffin, she threw herself upon it, exclaiming, "Mother,

it's your own Dora—mother—mother—don't, mother—don't lave me—don't—I won't let her go—I won't let her go! I—I—" Even before she could utter the words she intended to say, her head sank down, and her pale but beautiful cheek lay exactly beside the name, Bridget M'Mahon, that was upon it.

"The poor child has fainted," they exclaimed, "bring her to the fresh air."

Ere any one had time, however, to raise her, James Cavanagh rushed over to the coffin, and seizing her in his arms, bore her to the street, where he placed her upon one of the chairs that had been left there to support the coffin until keened over by the relatives and friends, previous to its being placed in the hearse; for such is the custom. There is something exceedingly alarming in a swoon to a person who witnesses it for the first time; which was the case with James Cavanagh. Having placed her on the chair, he looked wildly upon her; then as wildly upon those who were crowding round him. "What ails her?" he exclaimed—"what ails her?—she is dead!—she is dead! Dora—Dora dear—Dora dear, can't you spake or hear me?"

Whilst he pronounced the words, a shower of tears gushed rapidly from his eyes and fell upon her beautiful features, and in the impressive tenderness of the moment, he caught her to his heart, and with rapturous distraction and despair kissed her lips and exclaimed, "She is dead!—she is dead!—an' all that's in the world is nothing to the love I had for her!"

"Stand aside, James," said his sister Kathleen; "leave this instantly. Forgive him, Bryan," she said, looking at her lover with a burning brow, "he doesn't know what he is doing."

"No, Kathleen," replied her brother, with a choking voice, "neither for you nor for him, nor for a human crature, will I leave her."

"James, I'm ashamed of you," said Hanna, rapidly and energetically disengaging his arms from about the insensible girl; "have you no respect for Dora? If you love her as you say, you could hardly act as you did."

"Why," said he, staring at her, "what did I do?"

Bryan took him firmly by the arm, and said, "Come away, you foolish boy; I don't think you know what you did. Leave her to the girls. There, she is recoverin'."

She did soon recover; but weak and broken down as she was, no persuasion nor even authority could prevail upon her to remain at home. Jemmy Burke, who had intended to offer Kathleen a seat upon his car, which, of course, she would not have accepted, was now outmanœuvred by his wife, who got Dora beside herself, after having placed a sister of Tom M'Mahon's beside him.

At length the coffin was brought out, and the keene raised over it, on the conclusion of which it was placed in the hearse, and the procession began to move on.

There is nothing in the rural districts of this country that so clearly indicates the respect entertained for any family as the number of persons which, when a death takes place in it, attend the funeral. In such a case, the length of the procession is the test of esteem in which the party has been held. Mrs. M'Mahon's funeral was little less than a mile long. All the respectable farmers and bodaghs, as they call them, or half-sirs in the parish, were in attendance, as a mark of respect for the virtues of the deceased, and of esteem for the integrity and upright spirit of the family that had been deprived of her so unexpectedly.

Hycy and his friend, Harry Clinton, of course rode together, Finigan, the schoolmaster, keeping as near them as he could; but not so near as to render his presence irksome to them, when he saw that they had no wish for it.

"Well, Harry," said his companion, "what do you think of the last scene?"

"You allude to Cavanagh's handsome young son, and the very pretty girl that fainted, poor thing!"

"Of course I do," replied Hycy.

"Why," said the other, "I think the whole thing was very simple, and consequently very natural. The young fellow, who is desperately in love—there is no doubt of that—thought she had died; and upon my soul, Hycy, there is a freshness and a purity in the strongest raptures of such a passion, that neither you nor I can dream of. I think, however, I can understand, or guess at rather, the fulness of heart and the tenderness by which he was actuated."

"What do you think of Miss Cavanagh?" asked Hycy, with more of interest than he had probably ever felt in her before.

"What do I think?" said the other, looking at him with a good deal of surprise. "What *can* I think? What *could* any man that has either taste or common-sense think? Faith, Hycy, to be plain with you, I think her one of the finest girls, if not the very finest, I ever saw. Heavens! what would not that girl be if she had received the advantages of a polished and comprehensive education?"

"She is very much of a lady as it is," added Hycy, "and has great natural dignity and unstudied grace, although I must say

that she has left me under no reason to feel any particular obligations to her."

"And yet there is a delicate and graceful purity in the beauty of little Dora, which is quite captivating," observed Clinton.

"Very well," replied the other, "I make you a present of the two fair rustics; give me the interesting Maria. Ah, Harry, see what education and manner do. Maria is a delightful girl."

"She is an amiable and a good girl," said her brother; "but, in point of personal attractions, quite inferior to either of the two we have been speaking of."

"Finigan," said Hycy—"I beg your pardon, O'Finigan—the great O'Finigan, Philomath—are you a good judge of beauty?"

"Why, then, Mr. Hycy," replied the pedagogue, "I think, above all subjects, that a thorough understanding of that same comes most natural to an Irishman. It is a pleasant topic to discuss at all times."

"Much pleasanter than marriage, I think," said Clinton, smiling.

"Ah, Mr. Clinton," replied the other, with a shrug, "*de mortuis nil nisi bonum;* but as touching beauty, in what sense do you ask my opinion?"

"Whether now, for instance, would your learned taste prefer Miss Cavanagh or Miss Dora M'Mahon? and give your reasons."

"Taste, Mr. Hycy, is never, or at least seldom, guided by reason; the question, however, is a fair one."

"One at least on a fair subject," observed Clinton.

"Very well said, Mr. Clinton," replied the schoolmaster, with a grin—"there goes wit for us, no less—and originality besides. See what it is to have a great janius!—ha! ha! ha!"

"Well, Mr. O'Finigan," pursued Hycy, "but about the ladies? You have not given us your opinion."

"Why, then, they are both highly gifted wid beauty, and strongly calculated to excite the amorous sentiments of refined and elevated affection."

"Well done, Mr. Plantation," said Hycy; "you are improving—proceed."

"Miss Cavanagh, then," continued Finigan, "I'd say was a goddess, and Miss M'Mahon her attendant nymph."

"Good again, O'Finigan," said Clinton; "you are evidently at home in the mythology."

"Among the goddesses, at any rate," replied the master, with another grin.

"Provided there is no matrimony in the question," said Clinton.

"Ah, Mr. Clinton, don't, if you please. That's a subject you may respect yet as much as I do; but regarding my opinion of the two beauties in question, why was it solicited, Mr. Hycy?" he added, turning to that worthy gentlemen.

"Faith, I'm not able to say, most learned Philomath; only, is it true that Bryan, the clodhopper, has matrimonial designs upon the fair daughter of the regal Cavanagh?"

"*Sic vult fama,* Mr. Hycy, upon condition that a certain accomplished young gentleman, whose surname commences with the second letter of the alphabet, won't offer—for in that case, it is affirmed, that the clodhopper should travel. By the way, Mr. Clinton, I met your uncle and Mr. Fethertonge riding up towards Ahadarra this morning."

"Indeed!" exclaimed both; and as they spoke, each cast a look of inquiry at the other.

"What could bring them to Ahadarra, gentlemen?" asked Finigan, in a tone of voice which rendered it a nice point to determine whether it was a simple love of knowledge that induced him to put the question, or some other motive that might have lain within a kind of ironical gravity that accompanied it.

"Why, I suppose a pair of good horses," replied Hycy, "and their own inclination."

"It was not the last, at all events," said Finigan, "that ever brought a thief to the gallows—ha! ha! ha! we must be facetious sometimes, Mr. Hycy."

"You appear to enjoy that joke, Mr. Finigan," said Hycy, rather tartly.

"Faith," replied Finigan, "it's a joke that very few do enjoy, I think."

"What is?"

"Why, the gallows, sir—ha! ha! ha! but don't forget the O if you plaise—ever and always the big O before Finigan—ha! ha! ha!"

"Come, Clinton," said Hycy, "move on a little. D—n that fellow!" he cried—"he's a sneering scoundrel; and I'm half inclined to think he has more in him than one would be apt to give him credit for."

"By the way, what could the visit to Ahadarra mean?" asked Clinton. "Do you know anything about it, Hycy?"

"Not about this; but it is very likely that I shall cause them, or one of them at least, to visit it on some other occasion ere long; and that's all I can say now. Curse that *keening*, what a barbarous practice it is!"

"I think not," said the other; "on the contrary, I am of opinion that there's something strikingly wild and poetical in it—something that argues us Irish to be a people of deep feeling and strong imagination—two of the highest gifts of intellect."

"All stuff," replied the accomplished Hycy, who, among his other excellent qualities, could never afford to speak a good word to his country or her people. "All stuff and barbarous howling that we learned from the wolves when we had them in Ireland. Here we are at the graveyard."

"Hycy," said his friend, "it never occurred to me to thing of asking what religion you believe in."

"It is said," replied Hycy, "that a fool may propose a question which a wise man can't answer. As to religion, I have not yet made any determination among the variety that is abroad. A man, however, can be at no loss; for as every one of them is the best, it matters little which of them he chooses. I think it likely I shall go to church with your sister, should we ever do matrimony together. To a man like me who's indifferent, respectability alone ought to determine."

Clinton made no reply to this; and in a few minutes afterward they entered the churchyard, the coffin having been taken out of the hearse and borne on the shoulders of her four nearest relatives,—Tom M'Mahon, in deep silence and affliction, preceding it as chief mourner.

There is a prostrating stupor, or rather a kind of agonizing delirium that comes over the mind when we are forced to mingle with crowds, and have our ears filled with the voices of lamentation, the sounds of the death-bell, or the murmur of many people in conversation. 'Twas thus M'Mahon felt during the whole procession. Sometimes he thought it was relief, and again he felt as if it was only the mere alternation of suffering into a sharper and more dreadful sorrow; for, change as it might, there lay tugging at his heart the terrible consciousness that she, the bride of his youthful love and the companion of his larger and more manly affection—the blameless wife and the stainless woman—was about to be consigned to the grave, and that his eyes in this life must never rest upon her again.

When the coffin was about to be lowered down, all the family, one after another, clasped their arms about it, and kissed it with a passionate fervor of grief that it was impossible to witness with firmness. At length her husband, who had been looking on, approached it, and clasping it in his arms like the rest, he said—"for ever and for ever, and for ever, Bridget—but, no, gracious God, no; the day will come, Bridget, when I will be with you here—I don't care now how soon. My happiness is gone, *asthore machree*—life is nothing to me now—all's empty; and there's neither joy, nor ease of mind, nor comfort for me any more. An' this is our last partin'—this is our last farewell, Bridget dear; but from this out my hope is to be with you here; and if nothing else on my bed of death was to console me, it would be, and it will be, that you and I will then sleep together, never to be parted more. That will be my consolation."

"Now, father dear," said Bryan, "we didn't attempt to stop or prevent you, and I hope you'll be something calm and come away for a little."

"Best of sons! but aren't you all good, for how could you be otherwise with her blood in your veins?—bring me away; come you, Dora darlin'—ay, that's it—support the blessed child between you and Hanna, Kathleen darlin'. Oh, wait, wait till we get out of hearin, or the noise of the clay fallin' on the coffin will kill me."

They then walked to some distance, where they remained until the "narrow house" was nearly filled, after which they once more surrounded it until the last sod was beaten in. This being over, the sorrowing group sought their way home with breaking hearts, leaving behind them her whom they had loved so well reposing in the cold and unbroken solitude of the grave.

CHAPTER XIV.

A Mysterious Letter—Hycy Disclaims Sobriety—Ahadarra's in for it.

One day about a month after Mrs. M'Mahon's funeral, Harry Clinton was on his way to Jemmy Burke's, when he met Nanny Peety going towards Ballymacan.

"Well, Nanny," he inquired, "where are you bound for, now?"

"To the post-office with a letter from Masther Hycy, sir. I wanted him to tell me who it was for, but he would not. Will you, Mr. Clinton?" and she held out the letter to him as she spoke.

Clinton felt a good deal surprised to see that it was addressed to his uncle, and also written in a hand which he did not recognize to be that of Hycy Burke.

"Are you sure, Nanny," he asked, "that this letter was written by Mr. Hycy?"

"Didn't I see him, sir?" she replied; "he wrote it before my eyes a minute before he handed it to me. Who is it for, Mr. Clinton?"

"Why are you so very anxious to know, Nanny?" he inquired.

"Sorra thing," she replied, "but curiosity—a woman's curiosity, you know."

"Well, Nanny, *you* know, or ought to

know, that it would not be right in me to tell you who the letter is for, when Mr. Hycy did not think proper to do so."

"True enough, sir," she replied; "an' I beg your pardon, Mr. Clinton, for asking you; indeed it was wrong in me to tell you who it came from even, bekaise Mr. Hycy told me not to let any one see it, only jist to slip it into the post-office unknownst, as I passed it; an' that was what made me wish to know who it was goin' to, since the thruth must be tould."

Clinton in turn now felt his curiosity stimulated as to the contents of this mysterious epistle, and he resolved to watch, if possible, what effect the perusal of it might have on his uncle, otherwise he was never likely to hear a syllable that was contained in it, that worthy relative being, from official necessity, a most uncommunicative person in all his proceedings.

"I wonder," observed Clinton, "that Mr. Hycy would send to any one a letter so slurred and blotted with ink as that is."

"Ay, but he blotted it purposely himself," replied Nanny, "and that too surprised me, and made me wish to know what he could mane by it."

"Perhaps it's a love-letter, Nanny," said Clinton, laughing.

"I would like to know who it is to, at any rate," said the girl; "but since you won't tell me, sir, I must try and not lose my rest about it. Good-bye, Mr. Clinton."

"Good-bye, Nanny;" and so they parted.

Young Clinton, who, though thoughtless and fond of pleasure, was not without many excellent points of character, began now to perceive, by every day's successive intimacy, the full extent of Hycy Burke's profligacy of morals, and utter want of all honorable principle. Nothwithstanding this knowledge, however, he felt it extremely difficult, nay, almost impossible, to separate himself from Hycy, who was an extremely pleasant young fellow, and a very agreeable companion when he pleased. He had in fact gained that personal ascendancy over him, or that licentious influence which too many of his stamp are notorious for exercising over better men than themselves; and he found that he could not readily throw Hycy off, without being considerably a loser by the act.

"I shall have nothing to do with his profligacy," said he, "or his want of principle, and I shall let him know, at all events, that I will not abide by the agreement or compromise entered into between us some time since at his father's. He shall not injure an honest man for me, nor shall I promise him even neutrality with respect to his proposal for my sister, whom I would rather see dead a hundred times than the wife of such a fellow."

The next morning, about half an hour before breakfast, he told his uncle that he was stepping into town and would bring him any letters that might be for him in the post-office. He accordingly did so, and received two letters, one Hycy's and the other with the crest and frank of the sitting member for the county, who was no other than young Chevydale. His uncle was at breakfast when he handed them to him, and we need hardly say that the M. P. was honored by instant attention. The Still-hound read it over very complacently. "Very well," he exclaimed; "very well, indeed, so far. Harry, we must be on the alert, now the elections are approaching, and Chevydale will be stoutly opposed, it seems. We must work for him, and secure as many votes as we can. It is our interest to do so, Harry,—and he will make it our interest besides."

"Has principle nothing to do with it, sir?"

"Principle! begad, sir," retorted the uncle, "there's no such thing as principle—lay that down as a fact—there's no such thing in this world as principle."

"Well, but consistency, uncle. For instance, you know you always vote on the Tory side, and Chevydale is a Liberal and an Emancipator."

"Consistency is all d—d stuff, Harry, as principle. What does it mean? why that if a man's once wrong he's always to be wrong—that is just the amount of it. There's Chevydale, for instance, he has a brother who is a rank Tory and a Commissioner of Excise, mark that; Chevydale and he play into each other's hands, and Chevydale some of these days will sell the Liberals, that is, if he can get good value for them. If I now vote on the Tory side against Chevydale, his brother, the Tory Commissioner, will be my enemy in spite of all his Toryism; but if I vote and exert myself for Chevydale, the Liberal, I make his Tory of a brother my friend for life. And now, talk to me about principle, or consistency either."

His nephew could not but admit, that the instances adduced by his uncle were admirably calculated to illustrate his argument, and he accordingly pursued the subject no further.

"Ay!" exclaimed the Still-hound, "what d—d scrawl have we got here? Ay, ay, why this is better than I expected."

"What is better, uncle?" said the nephew, venturing an experiment.

"Why," replied the sagacious old rascal, "for you to mind your business, if you have

any, and to let me mind mine, without making impertinent inquiries, Master Harry." With these words he went and locked up both letters in his desk. As we, however, possess the power of unlocking his desk, and reading the letter to boot, we now take the liberty of laying it in all its graphic beauty and elegance before our readers—

"To Misther Klinton, Sir:

"Af you go this nite bout seven clocks or thereaway, you'd find a Still-Hed an' Worm At full work, in they upper End iv The brown Glen in Ahadarra. Sir, thrum wan iv Dic amstrung's Orringemen an' a fren to the axshize."

The gauger after breakfast again resumed the conversation as follows:—

"Have you changed your mind, Harry, regarding the Excise? because if you have I think I may soon have an opportunity of getting you a berth."

"No, sir, I feel an insurmountable repugnance to the life of a Still—hem."

"Go on, man, to the life of a Still-hunter. Very well. Your father's death last year left you and your sister there dependent upon me, for the present at least; for what could a medical man only rising into practice, with a family to support and educate, leave behind him?"

"Unfortunately, sir, it is too true."

"In the mean time you may leave '*unfortunate*' out, and thank God that you had the shelter of my roof to come to; and be on your knees, too, that I was a bachelor. Well, I am glad myself that I had and have a home for you; but still, Harry, you ought to think of doing something for yourself; for I may not live always, you know, and beside I am not rich. You don't relish surgery, you say?"

"I can't endure it, uncle."

"But you like farming?"

"Above every other mode of life."

"Very well, I think it's likely I shall have a good farm to put you into before long."

"Thank you, uncle. You may rest assured that both Maria and myself are fully sensible of the kindness we have experienced at your hands."

"Small thanks to me for that. Who the devil would I assist, if not my brother's orphans? It is true, I despise the world, but still we must make our use of it. I know it consists of only knaves and fools. Now, I respect the knaves; for if it were'nt for their roguery, the world would never work; it would stand still and be useless. The fools I despise, not so much because they *are* fools, as because they would be knaves if they could; so that, you see I return again to my favorite principle of no honesty. I am going to Ballymacan on business, so good-bye to you both."

"Uncle," said his nephew, "one word with you before you go."

"What is it?"

"Would you suffer me to offer you a word of advice, and will you excuse me for taking such a liberty with a man of your experience?"

"Certainly, Harry, and shall always feel thankful to any one that gives me good advice."

"If this is not good advice, it is at least well intended."

"Let us hear it first, and then we shall judge better."

"You say you will procure me a farm. Now, uncle, there is one thing I should wish in connection with that transaction, which is, that you would have no underhand—hem! —no private understanding of any kind with Mr.—Hycy Burke."

"Me a private understanding with Hycy Burke! What in the devil's name has put such a crotchet as that into your head?"

"I only speak as I do, because I believe you have received a private communication from him."

"Have I, faith! If so I am obliged to you —but I am simply ignorant of the fact you mention; for, with my own knowledge, I never received a line from him in my life."

"Then I must be wrong," replied Harry; "that is all."

"Wrong! Certainly you are wrong. Hycy Burke, I am told, is a compound of great knave and gross fool, the knavery rather prevailing. But how is this? Are not you and he inseparable?"

"He is a companion, uncle, but not a friend in the true sense—nor, indeed, in any sense of that word. I spoke now, however, with reference to a particular transaction, and not to his general character."

"Well, then, I have no underhand dealings with him, as you are pleased to call them, nor ever had. I never to my knowledge received a line from him in my life; but I tell you that if he comes in my way, and that I can make use of him, I will. Perhaps he may serve us in the Elections. Have you anything else to ask?"

"No sir," replied Harry, laughing. "Only I hope you will excuse me for the liberty I took."

"Certainly, with all my heart, and you shall be always welcome to take the same liberty. Good-bye, again."

Clinton now felt satisfied that Hycy's letter

to his uncle was an anonymous one, and although he could not divine its contents, he still felt assured that it was in some way connected with the farm transaction, or at all events detrimental to Bryan M'Mahon. He consequently resolved to see Hycy, against whom, or rather against whose principles he was beginning to entertain a strong repugnance, and without any hesitation to repudiate the engagement he had entered into with him.

He found Hycy at home, or rather he found him in conversation with Bat Hogan behind his father's garden.

"What was that ruffian wanting with you, Hycy, if it's a fair question?"

"Perfectly," said Hycy, "from you; but not in sooth from your worthy uncle."

"How is that?"

"Simply, he wants to know if I'd buy a keg of Poteen which, it seems, he has to sell. I declined because I have a sufficiently ample stock of it on hands."

"My uncle," said Clinton, prefers it to any other spirits; indeed, at home he never drinks any other, and whenever he dines, thanks those who give it the preference."

"Come in, and let us have a glass of poteen grog, in the mean time," said Hycy, "for it's better still in grog than in punch. It's a famous relish for a slice of ham; but, as the Scotch say, baith's best."

Having discussed the grog and ham, the conversation went on.

"Hycy," proceeded his companion, "with respect to that foolish arrangement or bargain we made the other night, I won't have anything to say or do in it. You shall impoverish or ruin no honest man on my account. I was half drunk or whole drunk, otherwise I wouldn't have listened to such a proposal."

"What do you mean?" said Hycy, with a look of very natural surprise, and a pause of some time, "I don't understand you."

"Don't you remember the foolish kind of stipulation we entered into with reference to M'Mahon's farm, of Ahadarra, on the one hand, and my most amiable (d——n me but I ought to be horsewhipped for it) sister on the other?"

"No," replied Hycy, "devil a syllable. My word and honor, Harry."

"Well, if you don't, then, it's all right. You didn't appear to be tipsy, though."

"I never do, Harry. In that respect I'm the d——dest, hypocritical rascal in Europe. I'm a perfect phenomenon; for, in proportion as I get drunk in intellect, I get sober both in my carriage and appearance. However, in Heaven's name let me know the bargain if there was one?"

"No, no," replied his friend, "it was a disgraceful affair on both sides, and the less that's said of it the better."

By a good deal of persuasion, however, and an additional glass of grog, he prevailed on Clinton to repeat the substance of the stipulation; on hearing which, as if for the first time, he laughed very heartily.

"This liquor," he proceeded, "is a strange compound, and puts queer notions into our head. Why if there's an honest decent fellow in Europe, whom I would feel anxious to serve beyond another, next to yourself, Harry, it is Bryan M'Mahon. But why I should have spoken so, I can't understand at all. In the first place, what means have I of injuring the man? And what is stronger still, what inclination have I, or could have—and what is still better—should have?"

"I do assure you it did not raise you in my opinion."

"Faith, no wonder, Harry, and I am only surprised you didn't speak to me sooner about it. Still," he proceeded, smiling, "there is one portion of it I should not wish to see cancelled—I mean your advocacy with Miss Clinton."

"To be plain with you, Hycy, I wash my hands out of that affair too; I won't promise advocacy."

"Well neutrality?"

"The truth is, neither neutrality nor advocacy would avail a rush. I have reason to think that my sister's objections against you are insuperable."

"On what do they rest?" asked the other.

"They are founded upon your want of morals," replied Clinton.

"Well, suppose I reform my morals?"

"That is, substitute hypocrisy for profligacy; I fear, Hycy, the elements of reformation are rather slight within you."

"Seriously, you do me injustice; and, besides, a man ought not to be judged of his morals before marriage, but after."

"Faith, both before and after, in my opinion, Hycy. No well-educated, right-minded girl would marry a man of depraved morals, knowing him to be such."

"But I really am not worse than others, nor so bad as many. Neither have I the reputation of being an immoral man. A little wild and over-impulsive from animal spirits I may be, but all that will pass off with the new state. No, no, d—n it, don't allow Miss Clinton to imbibe such prejudices. I do not say that I am a saint; but I shall settle down and bring her to church very regularly, and hear the sermon with most edifying attention. Another glass of grog?"

"No, no."

"But I hope and trust, my dear Harry, that you have not been making impressions against me."

"Unquestionably not. I only say you have no chance whatever in that quarter."

"Will you allow me to try?" asked Hycy.

"I have not the slightest objection," replied the other, "because I know how it will result."

"Very well,—thank you even for that same, my dear Harry; but, seriously speaking, I fear that neither you nor I are leading the kind of lives we ought, and so far I cannot quarrel with your sister's principles. On the contrary, they enable me to appreciate her if possible still more highly; for a clear and pure standard of morals in a wife is not only the best fortune but the best security for happiness besides. You might stop and dine?"

"No, thank you, it is impossible. By the way, I have already spoiled my dinner with that splendid ham of yours. Give me a call when in town."

Hycy, after Clinton's departure, began to review his own position. Of ultimately succeeding with Miss Clinton he entertained little doubt. So high and confident was his vanity, that he believed himself capable of performing mighty feats, and achieving great successes, with the fair sex,—all upon the strength of having destroyed the reputation of two innocent country girls. Somehow, notwithstanding his avowed attachment for Miss Clinton, he could not help now and then reverting to the rich beauty and magnificent form of Kathleen Cavanagh; nor was this contemplation of his lessened by considering that, with all his gentlemanly manners, and accomplishments, and wealth to boot, she preferred the clod-hopper, as he called Bryan M'Mahon, to himself.

He felt considerably mortified at this reflection, and the more especially, as he had been frequently taunted with it and laughed at for it by the country girls, whenever he entered into any bantering conversation. A thought now struck him by which he could, as he imagined, execute a very signal revenge upon M'Mahon through Kathleen, and perhaps, ultimately upon Kathleen herself, if he should succeed with Miss Clinton; for he did not at all forgive Kathleen the two public instances of contempt with which she had treated him. There was still, however, another consideration. His father had threatened to bring home his brother Edward, then destined for the church, and altogether to change his intentions in that respect. Indeed, from the dry and caustic manner of the old man towards him of late, he began to entertain apprehensions upon the subject. Taking therefore all these circumstances into consideration, he resolved in any event to temporize a little, and allow the father to suppose that he might be prevailed upon to marry Kathleen Cavanagh.

In the course of that evening, after dinner, while his father and he were together and his mother not present, he introduced the subject himself.

"I think, Mr. Burke, if I remember correctly, you proposed something like a matrimonial union between the unrivalled Katsey Cavanagh and the accomplished Hycy."

"I did, God forgive me."

"I have been thinking over that subject since."

"Have you, indeed," said his father; "an' am I to make Ned a priest or a farmer?" he asked dryly.

"The church, I think, Mr. Burke, is, or ought to be, his destination."

"So, after all, you prefer to have my money and my property, along wid a good wife, to your brother Ned—Neddy I ought to call him, out of compliment to you—ha! ha! ha!"

"Proceed, Mr. Burke, you are pleased to be facetious."

"To your brother Ned—Neddy—having them, and maybe along wid them the same wife too?"

"No, not exactly; but out of respect to your wishes."

"What's that?" said the old man, staring at him with a kind of comic gravity—"out of respect to *my* wishes!"

"That's what I've said," replied the son. "Proceed."

His father looked at him again, and replied, "Proceed yourself—it was you introduced the subject. I'm now jack-indifferent about it."

"All I have to say," continued Hycy, "is that I withdraw my ultimate refusal, Mr. Burke. I shall entertain the question, as they say; and it is not improbable but that I may dignify the fair Katsey with the honorable title of Mrs. Burke."

"I wish you had spoken a little sooner, then," replied his father, "bekaise it so happens that Gerald Cavanagh an' I have the match between her and your brother Ned as good as made."

"My brother Ned! Why, in the name of all that's incredible, how could that be encompassed?"

"Very aisily," said his father, "by the girl's waitin' for him. Ned is rather young yet, I grant you; he's nineteen, however, and two years more, you know, will make him one-and-twenty—take him out o' chancery, as they say."

"Very good, Mr. Burke, very good; in that case I have no more to say."

"Well," pursued the father, in the same dry, half-comic, half-sarcastic voice, "but what do *you* intend to do with yourself?"

"As to that," replied Hycy, who felt that the drift of the conversation was setting in against him, "I shall take due time to consider."

"What height are you?" asked the father, rather abruptly.

"I can't see, Mr. Burke, I really can't see what my height has to do with the question."

"Bekaise," proceeded the other, "I have some notion of putting you into the army. You spoke of it wanst yourself, remimber; but then there's an objection even to *that*."

"Pray, what is the objection, Mr. Burke?"

"Why, it's most likely you'd have to fight —if you took to the milintary trade."

"Why, upon my word, Mr. Burke, you shine in the sarcastic this evening."

"But, at any rate, you must take your chance for that. You're a fine, active young fellow, and I suppose if they take to runnin' you won't be the last of them."

"Good, Mr. Burke—proceed, though."

"An' accordingly I have strong notions of buying you a corplar's or a sargent's commission. A good deal of that, however, depends upon yourself; but, as you say, I'll think of it."

Hycy, who could never bear ridicule, especially from the very man whom he attempted to ridicule most, bounced up, and after muttering something in the shape of an oath that was unintelligible, said, assuming all his polite irony:—

"Do so, Mr. Burke; in the mean time I have the pleasure of wishing you a very good evening, sir."

"Oh, a good-evening, sir," replied the old fellow, "and when you come home from the wars a full non-commissioned officer, you'll be scowerin' up your halbert every Christmas an' Aisther, I hope; an' telling us long stories of all you killed an' ate while you were away from us."

Harry Clinton, now aware that the anonymous letter which his uncle had received that morning was the production of Hycy, resolved to watch the gauger's motions very closely. After a great deal of reflection upon Hycy's want of memory concerning their bargain, and upon a close comparison between his conduct and whole manner on the night in question, and his own account of the matter in the course of their last interview, he could not help feeling that his friend had stated a gross falsehood, and that the pretended want of recollection was an ingenious after-thought, adopted for the purpose of screening himself from the consequences of whatever injury he might inflict upon Bryan M'Mahon.

"Harry," said his uncle, as nine o'clock approached, "I am going upon duty to-night."

"In what direction, sir? may I ask."

"Yes, you may, but I'm not bound to tell you. In this instance, however, there is no necessity for secrecy; it is now too late to give our gentleman the hard word, so I don't care much if I do tell you. I am bound for Ahadarra."

"For Ahadarra—you say for Ahadarra, uncle?"

"I do, nephew."

"By heavens, he is the deepest and most consummate scoundrel alive," exclaimed Harry; "I now see it all. Uncle, I wish to God you would—would—I don't know what to say."

"That's quite evident, nor what to think either. In the mean time the soldiers are waiting for me in Ballymacan, and so I must attend to my duty, Harry."

"Is it upon the strength of the blotted letter you got this morning, sir, that you are now acting?"

"No, sir; but upon the strength of a sure spy dispatched this day to the premises. I am a little too shrewd now, Master Harry, to act solely upon anonymous information. I have been led too many devil's dances by it in my time, to be gulled in my old age on the strength of it."

He immediately prepared himself for the excursion, mounted his horse, that was caparisoned in a military saddle, the holsters furnished with a case of pistols, which, with a double case that he had on his person and two daggers, constituted his weapons of offence and defence.

Their path lay directly to the south for about two miles. Having traversed this distance they reached cross-roads, one of which branched towards the left and was soon lost in a rough brown upland, into which it branched by several little pathways that terminated in little villages or solitary farmer's houses. For about two miles more they were obliged to cross a dark reach of waste moor, where the soil was strong and well capable of cultivation. Having avoided the villages and more public thoroughfares, they pushed upward until they came into the black heath itself, where it was impossible that horses could travel in such darkness as then prevailed; for it was past ten o'clock, near the close of December. Clinton consequently left his horse in the care of two soldiers on a bit of green meadow by the side of Ahadarra Lough—a small tarn or moun-

tain lake about two hundred yards in diameter. They then pushed up a long round swelling hill, on the other side of which was a considerable stretch of cultivated land with Bryan M'Mahon's new and improved houses at the head of it. This they kept to their right until they came in sight of the wild but beautiful and picturesque Glen of Althadhawan, which however was somewhat beyond the distance they had to go. At length, after breasting another hill which was lost in the base of Cullimore, they dropped down rapidly into a deep glen through which ran a little streamlet that took its rise not a quarter of a mile above them, and which supplied the apparatus for distillation with soft clear water. This they followed until near the head of the glen, where, in a position which might almost escape even a gauger's eye, they found the object of their search.

Tumbled around them in all directions were a quantity of gigantic rocks thrown as it were at random during some Titanic warfare or diversion—between two of which the still-house was built in such a way, that, were it not for the smoke in daylight, it would be impossible to discover it, or at all events, to suppose that it could be the receptacle of a human being.

On entering, Clinton and his men were by no means surprised to find the place deserted, for this in fact was frequently the case on such occasions. On looking through the premises, which they did by the light of a large fire, they found precisely that which had been mentioned in Hycy's letter—to wit, the Still, the Head, and the Worm; but with the exception of an old broken rundlet or two, and a crazy vessel of wash that was not worth removing, there was nothing whatsoever besides.

The Still was on the fire half filled with water, the Head was on the Still, and the Worm was attached to the Head precisely as if they were in the process of distillation.

"Ay," said Clinton, on seeing how matters stood, "I think I understand this affair. It's a disappointment in one sense—but a sure enough card in another. The fine is certain, and Ahadarra is most undoubtedly *in* for it."

CHAPTER XV.

State of the Country—Hycy's Friendship for Bryan M'Mahon—Bryan's Interview with his Landlord.

Bryan M'Mahon's last interview with Fethertonge was of so cheering a nature, and indicated on the part of that gentleman so much true and sterling kindness towards the young man and his family, that he felt perfectly satisfied on leaving him, and after having turned their conversation over in his mind, that he might place every confidence in the assurance he had given him. His father, too, who had never for a moment doubted Feathertonge, felt equally gratified at Bryan's report of their interview, as indeed did the whole family; they consequently spared neither labor nor expense in the improvements which they were making on their farms.

The situation of the country and neighborhood at this period was indeed peculiar, and such as we in this unhappy country have experienced both before and since. I have already stated, that there was a partial failure of the potato crop that season, a circumstance which uniformly is the forerunner of famine and sickness. The failure, however, on that occasion was not caused by a blight in the haulm, or, to use plainer words, by a sudden withering of the stalks, but by large portions of the seed failing to grow. The partial scarcity, however, occasioned by this, although it did not constitute what can with propriety be termed famine, cause the great mass of pauperism which such a season always extends and increases, to press so heavily upon the struggling farmers, that their patience and benevolence became alike tired out and exhausted. This perpetually recurring calamity acts with a most depressing effect upon those persons in the country who have any claim to be considered independent. It deprives them of hope, and consequently of energy, and by relaxing the spirit of industry which has animated them, tends in the course of time to unite them to the great body of pauperism which oppresses and eats up the country. But let us not be misunderstood. This evil alone is sufficiently disastrous to the industrial energies of the class we mention; but when, in addition to this, the hitherto independent farmer has to contend with high rents, want of sympathy in his landlord, who probably is ignorant of his very existence, and has never seen him perhaps in his life; and when it is considered that he is left to the sharp practice and pettifogging, but plausible rapacity of a dishonest agent, who feels that he is irresponsible, and may act the petty tryant and vindictive oppressor if he wishes, having no restraint over his principles but his interest, which, so far from restraining, only guides and stimulates them;—when we reflect upon all this, and feel, besides, that the political principles upon which the country is governed are those that are calculated to promote British at the expense of Irish interests—we

say, when we reflect upon and ponder over all this, we need not feel surprised that the prudent, the industrious, and the respectable, who see nothing but gradual decline and ultimate pauperism before them—who feel themselves neglected and overlooked, and know that every sixth or seventh year they are liable to those oppressive onsets of distress, sickness, and famine—we need not, we repeat, feel at all surprised that those who constitute this industrious and respectable class should fly from the evils which surround them, and abandon, whilst they possess the power of doing so, the country in which such evils are permitted to exist.

It is upon this principle, or rather upon these principles, and for these reasons, that the industry, the moral feeling, the independence, and the strength of the country have been passing out of it for years—leaving it, season after season, weaker, more impoverished, and less capable of meeting those periodical disasters which, we may almost say, are generated by the social disorder and political misrule of the country.

The fact is, and no reasonable or honest man capable of disencumbering himself of political prejudices can deny it, that up until a recent period the great body of the Irish people — the whole people — were mainly looked upon and used as political instruments in the hands of the higher classes, but not at all entitled to the possession of separate or independent interests in their own right. It is true they were allowed the possession of the forty-shilling franchise; but will any man say that the existence of that civil right was a benefit to the country? So far from that, it was a mere engine of corruption, and became, in the hands of the Irish landlords, one of the most oppressive and demoralizing curses that ever degraded a people. Perjury, fraud, falsehood, and dishonesty, were its fruits, and the only legacy it left to the country was an enormous mass of pauperism, and a national morality comparatively vitiated and depraved, in spite of all religious influence and of domestic affections that are both strong and tender. Indeed it is exceedingly difficult to determine whether it has been more injurious to the country in a political than in a moral sense. Be that as it may, it had a powerful effect in producing the evils that we now suffer, and our strong tendencies to social disorganization. By it the landlords were induced, for the sake of multiplying votes, to encourage the subdivision of small holdings into those that were actually only nominal or fictitious, and the consequences were, that in multiplying votes they were multiplying families that had no fixed means of subsistence—multiplying in fact a pauper population—multiplying not only perjury, fraud, falsehood, and dishonesty, but destitution, misery, disease and death. By the forty-shilling franchise, the landlords encumbered the soil with a loose and unsettled population that possessed within itself, as poverty always does, a fearful facility of reproduction—a population which pressed heavily upon the independent class of farmers and yeomen, but which had no legal claim upon the territory of the country. The moment, however, when the system which produced and ended this wretched class, ceased to exist, they became not only valueless in a political sense, but a dead weight upon the energies of the country, and an almost insuperable impediment to its prosperity. This great evil the landlords could conjure up, but they have not been able to lay it since. Like Frankenstein in the novel, it pursues them to the present moment, and must be satisfied or appeased in some way, or it will unquestionably destroy them. From the abolition of the franchise until now, an incessant struggle of opposing interests has been going on in the country. The "forties" and their attendants must be fed; but the soul on which they live in its present state is not capable of affording his time supporting them and afford must go claims to the landlord; for the food n poor to England to pay the rents and the "forties" must starve. They are now in the way of the landlord—they are now in the way of the farmer—they are in fact in the way of each other, and unless some wholesome and human principle, either of domestic employment or colonial emigration, or perhaps both, shall be adopted, they will continue to embarrass the country, and to drive out of it, always in connection with other causes, the very class of persons that constitute its remaining strength.

At the present period of our narrative the neighborhood of Ballymacan was in an unsettled and distressful state. The small farmers, and such as held from six to sixteen acres, at a rent which they could at any period with difficulty pay, were barely able to support themselves and their families upon the produce of their holdings, so that the claims of the landlord were out of the question. Such a position as this to the unhappy class we speak of, is only another name for ruin. The bailiff, who always lives upon the property, seeing their condition, and knowing that they are not able to meet the coming gale, reports accordingly to the agent, who, now cognizant that there is only one look-up for the rent, seizes the poor man's corn and cattle, leaving himself and his family within cold walls, and at an extin-

guished hearth. In this condition were a vast number in the neighborhood of the locality laid in our narrative. The extraordinary, but natural anxiety for holding land, and the equally ardent spirit of competition which prevails in the country, are always ready arguments in the mouth of the landlord and agent, when they wish to raise the rent or eject the tenant. "If *you* won't pay me such a rent, there are plenty that will. I have been offered more than you pay, and more than I ask, and you know I must look to my own interests!" In this case it is very likely that the landlord speaks nothing but the truth; and as he is pressed on by his necessities on the one hand, and the tenant on the other, the state of a country so circumstanced with respect to landed property and its condition may be easily conceived.

In addition, however, to all we have already detailed, as affecting the neighborhood of Ahadarra, we have to inform our readers that the tenantry upon the surrounding property were soon about to enjoy the luxury of a contested election. Chevydale had been the sitting member during two sessions of Parliament. He was, as we have already stated, an Emancipator and Liberal; but we need scarcely say that he did not get his seat upon these principles. He had been a convert to Liberalism since his election, and at the approaching crisis stood, it was thought, but an indifferent chance of being re-elected. The gentleman who had sat before was a sturdy Conservative, a good deal bigoted in politics, but possessing that rare and inestimable quality, or rather combination of qualities which constitute an honest man. He was a Major Vanston, a man of good property, and although somewhat deficient in the *suaviter in modo*, yet in consequence of his worth and sincerity, he was rather a favorite with the people, who in general relish sincerity and honesty wherever they find them in public men.

Having thus far digressed, we now beg leave to resume our narrative and once more return, from the contemplation of a state of things so painful to the progress of those circumstances which involve the fate of our humble individuals who constitute our *dramatis personæ*.

The seizure of the distillery apparatus on M'Mahon's farm of Ahadarra, was in a few days followed by knowledge of the ruin in which it must necessarily involve that excellent and industrious young man. At this time there was an act of parliament in existence against illicit distillation, but of so recent a date that it was only when a seizure similar to the foregoing had been made, that the people in any particular district became acquainted with it. By this enactment the offending individual was looked upon as having no farther violated the laws in that case made and provided, than those who had never been engaged in such pursuits at all. In other words, the innocent were equally punished with the guilty. A heavy fine was imposed—not on the offender, but on the whole townland in which he lived; so that the guilt of one individual was not visited as it ought to have been on the culprit himself, but equally distributed in all its penalties upon the other inhabitants of the district in question, who may have had neither act nor part in any violation of the laws whatsoever.

Bryan M'Mahon, on discovering the fearful position in which it placed him, scarcely knew on what hand to turn. His family were equally alarmed, and with just reason. Illicit distillation had been carried to incredible lengths for the last two or three years, and the statute in question was enacted with a hope that it might unite the people in a kind of legal confederacy against a system so destructive of industry and morals. The act, however ill-judged, and impolitic at best, was not merely imperative,—but fraught with ruin and bloodshed. It immediately became the engine of malice and revenge between individual enemies—often between rival factions, and not unfrequently between parties instigated against each other by political rancor and hatred. Indeed, so destructive of the lives and morals of the people was it found, that in the course of a very few years it was repealed, but not until it had led to repeated murders and brought ruin and destruction upon many an unoffending and industrious family.

Bryan now bethought him of the warnings he had received from the gauger and Fethertonge, and resolved to see both, that he might be enabled, if possible, to trace to its source the plot that had been laid for his destruction. He accordingly went down to his father's at Carriglass, where he had not been long when Hycy Burke made his appearance, "Having come that far on his way," he said, "to see him, and to ascertain the truth of the report that had gone abroad respecting the heavy resonsibility under which the illicit distillation had placed him." Bryan was naturally generous and without suspicion; but notwithstanding this, it was impossible that he should not entertain some slight surmises touching the sincerity of Burke.

"What is this, Bryan?" said the latter. "Can it be possible that you're *in* for the Fine, as report goes?"

"It's quite possible," replied Bryan; "on

yesterday I got a notice of proceedings from the Board of Excise."

"But," pursued his friend, "what devil could have tempted you to have anything to do with illicit distillation? Didn't you know the danger of it?"

"I had no more to do with it," replied Bryan, "than you had—nor I don't even rightly know yet who had; though, indeed, I believe I may say it was these vagabonds, the Hogans, that has their hands in everything that's wicked and disgraceful. They would ruin me if they could," said Bryan, "and I suppose it was with the hope of doing so that they set up the still where they did."

"Well, now," replied Hycy, with an air of easy and natural generosity, "I should be sorry to think so: they are d—d scoundrels, or rather common ruffians, I grant you; but still, Bryan, I don't like to suspect even such vagabonds without good grounds. Bad as we know them to be, I have my doubts whether they are capable of setting about such an act for the diabolical purpose of bringing you to ruin. Perhaps they merely deemed the place on your farm a convenient one to build a still-house in, and that they never thought further about it."

"Or what," replied Bryan, "if there was some one behind their backs who is worse than themselves? Mightn't sich a thing as that be possible?"

"True," replied Hycy, "true, indeed—that's not improbable. Stay—no—well it may be—but—no—I can't think it."

"What is it you can't think?"

"Why, such a thing might be," proceeded Hycy, "if you *have* an enemy; but I think, Bryan, you are too well liked—and justly so too—if you will excuse me for saying so to your face—to have *any* enemy capable of going such nefarious lengths as that."

Bryan paused and seemed a good deal struck with the truth of Hycy's observation—"There's raison, sure enough in what you say, Hycy," he observed. "I don't know that I have a single enemy—unless the Hogans themselves—that would feel any satisfaction in drivin' me to destruction."

"And besides," continued Hycy, "between you and me now, Bryan, who the devil with an ounce of sense in his head would trust such scoundrels, or put himself in their power?"

Bryan considered this argument a still more forcible one than the other.

"That's stronger still," he replied, "and indeed I am inclined to think that after all, Hycy, it happened as you say. Teddy Phats I think nothing at all about, for the poor, misshapen vagabone will distil poteen for any one that employs him."

"True," replied the other, "I agree with you; but what's to be done, Bryan? for that's the main point now."

"I scarcely know," replied Bryan, who now began to feel nothing but kindness towards Hycy, in consequence of the interest which that young fellow evidently took in his misfortune, for such, in serious truth, it must be called. "I am the only proprietor of Ahadarra," he proceeded, "and, as a matter of course, the whole fine falls on my shoulders."

"Ay, that's the devil of it; but at all events, Bryan, there is nothing got in this world without exertion and energy. Mr. Chevydale, the Member, is now at home: he has come down to canvass for the coming election. I would recommend you to see him at once. You know—but perhaps you don't though—that his brother is one of the Commissioners of Excise; so that I don't know any man who can serve you more effectually than Chevydale, if he wishes."

"But what could he do?" asked Bryan.

"Why, by backing a memorial from you, stating the particulars, and making out a strong case, he might get the fine reduced. I shall draw up such a memorial if you wish."

"Thank you, Hycy—I'm obliged to you—these, I dare say, will be the proper steps to take—thank you."

"Nonsense! but perhaps I may serve you a little in another way. I'm very intimate with Harry Clinton, and who knows but I may be able to influence the uncle a little through the nephew."

"It's whispered that you might do more through the niece," replied Bryan, laughing; "is that true?"

"Nonsense, I tell you," replied Hycy, affecting confusion; "for Heaven's sake, Bryan, say nothing about that; how did it come to your ears?"

"Faith, and that's more than I can tell you," replied the other; "but I know I heard it somewhere of late."

"It's not a subject, of course," continued Hycy, "that I should wish to become the topic of vulgar comment or conversation, and I'd much rather you would endeavor to discountenance it whenever you hear it spoken of. At all events, whether with niece or nephew," proceeded Hycy, "you may rest assured, that whatever service I can render you, I shall not fail to do it. You and I have had a slight misunderstanding, but on an occasion like this, Bryan, it should be a bitter one indeed that a man—a generous man at least,—would or ought to remember."

This conversation took place whilst Bryan

was proceeding to Fethertonge's, Hycy being also on his way home. On arriving at the turn of the road which led to Jemmy Burke's, Hycy caught the hand of his companion, which he squeezed with an affectionate warmth, so cordial and sincere in its character that Bryan cast every shadow of suspicion to the winds.

"Cheer up, Bryan, all will end better than you think, I hope. I shall draw up a memorial for you this evening, as strongly and forcibly as possible, and any other assistance that I can render you in this unhappy difficulty I will do it. I know I am about ninety pounds in your debt, and instead of talking to you in this way, or giving you fair words, I ought rather to pay you your money. The 'gentleman,' however, is impracticable for the present, but I trust—"

"Not a word about it," said Bryan, "you'll oblige me if you'll drop that part of the subject; but listen, Hycy,—I think you're generous and a little extravagant, and both is a good man's case—but that's not what I'm going to spake about, truth's best at all times; I heard that you were my enemy, and I was desired to be on my guard against you."

Hycy looked at him with that kind of surprise which is natural to an innocent man, and simply said, "May I ask by whom, Bryan?"

"I may tell you some other time," replied Bryan, "but I won't now; all I can say is, that I don't believe it, and I'm sure that ought to satisfy you."

"I shall expect you to tell me, Bryan," said the other, and then after returning a few steps, he caught M'Mahon's hand again, and shaking it warmly, once more added, "God bless you, Bryan; you are a generous high-minded young fellow, and I only wish I was like you."

Bryan, after they had separated, felt that Hycy's advice was the very best possible under the circumstances, and as he had heard for the first time that Chevydale was in the country, he resolved to go at once and state to him the peculiar grievance under which he labored.

Chevydale's house was somewhat nearer Ahadarra than Fethertonge's, but on the same line of road, and he accordingly proceeded to the residence of his landlord. The mansion indeed was a fine one. It stood on the brow of a gentle eminence, which commanded a glorious prospect of rich and highly cultivated country. Behind, the landscape rose gradually until it terminated in a range of mountains that protected the house from the north. The present structure was modern, having been built by old Chevydale, previous to his marriage. It was large and simple, but so majestic in appearance, that nothing could surpass the harmony that subsisted between its proportions and the magnificent old trees which studded the glorious lawn that surrounded it, and rose in thick extensive masses that stretched far away behind the house. It stood in a park, which for the beauties of wood and water was indeed worthy of its fine simplicity and grandeur—a park in which it was difficult to say whether the beautiful, the picturesque, or the wild, predominated most. And yet in this princely residence Mr. Chevydale did not reside more than a month, or at most two, during the whole year.

On reaching the hall-door, M'Mahon inquired from the servant who appeared, if he could see Mr. Chevydale.

"I'm afraid not," said the servant, "but I will see; what's your name?"

"Bryan M'Mahon, of Ahadarra, one of his tenants."

The servant returned to him in a few moments, and said, "Yes, he will see you; follow me."

Bryan entered a library, where he found his landlord and Fethertonge apparently engaged in business, and as he was in the act of doing so, he overheard Chevydale saying—"No, no, I shall always see my tenants."

Bryan made his obeisance in his own plain way, and Chevydale said—

"Are you M'Mahon of Ahadara?"

"I am, sir," replied Bryan.

"I thought you were a much older man," said Chevydale, "there certainly must be some mistake here," he added, looking at Fethertonge. "M'Mahon of Ahadarra was a middle-aged man several years ago, but this person is young enough to be his man."

"You speak of his uncle," replied Fethertonge, "who is dead. This young man, who now owns his uncle's farm, is son to Thomas M'Mahon of Carriglass. How is your father, M'Mahon? I hope he bears up well under his recent loss."

"Indeed but poorly, sir," replied Bryan, "I fear he'll never be the same man."

Chevydale here took to reading a newspaper, and in a minute or two appeared to be altogether unconscious of Bryan's presence.

"I'm afeard, sir," said Bryan, addressing himself to the agent, who was the only person likely to hear him, "I'm afeard, sir, that I've got into trouble."

"Into trouble? how is that?"

"Why, sir, there was a Still, Head, and Worm found upon Ahadarra, and I'm going to be fined for it."

"M'Mahon," replied the agent, "I am sor-

ry to hear this, both on your own account and that of your family. If I don't mistake, you were cautioned and warned against this; but it was useless; yes, I am sorry for it; and for you, too."

"I don't properly understand you, sir," said Bryan.

"Did I not myself forewarn you against having anything to do in matters contrary to the law? You must remember I did, and on the very last occasion, too, when you were in my office."

"I remember it right well, sir," replied Bryan, "and I say now as I did then, that I am not the man to break the law, or have act or part in anything that's contrary to it. I know nothing about this business, except that three ruffianly looking fellows named Hogan, common tinkers, and common vagabonds to boot—men that are my enemies—are the persons by all accounts who set up the still on my property. As for myself, I had no more to do in it or with it than yourself or Mr. Chevydale here."

"Well," replied Fethertonge, "I hope not. I should feel much disappointed if you had, but you know, Bryan," he added, good-humoredly, "we could scarcely expect that you should admit such a piece of folly, not to call it by a harsher name."

"If I had embarked in it," replied M'Mahon, "I sartinly would not deny it to you or Mr. Chevydale, at least; but, as I said before, I know nothing more about it, than simply it was these ruffians and a fellow named Phats, a Distiller, that set it a-working,—however, the question is, what am I to do? If I must pay the fine for the whole townland, it will beggar me—ruin me. It was that brought me to my landlord here," he added; "I believe, sir, you have a brother a Commissioner of Excise?"

"Eh? what is that?" asked Chevydale, looking up suddenly as Bryan asked the question.

M'Mahon was obliged to repeat all the circumstances once more, as did Feathertonge the warning he had given him against having any connection with illegal proceedings.

"I am to get a memorial drawn up to-morrow, sir," proceeded Bryan, "and I was thinking that by giving the Board of Excise a true statement of the case, they might reduce the fine; if they don't, I am ruined—that's all."

"Certainly," said his landlord, "that is a very good course to take; indeed, your only course."

"I hope, sir," proceeded Bryan, "that as you now know the true circumstances of the case, you'll be kind enough to support my petition; I believe your brother, sir, is one of the Commissioners; you would sartinly be able to do something with him."

"No," replied Chevydale, "I would not ask anything from *him*; but I shall support your Petition, and try what I can do with the other Commissioners. On principle, however, I make it a point never to ask anything from my brother."

"Will I bring you the Petition, sir?" asked Bryan.

"Fetch me the Petition."

"And Bryan," said Fethertonge, raising his finger at him as if by way of warning—and laughing—"hark ye, let this be the last."

"Fethertonge," said the landlord, "I see Pratt has been found guilty, and the sentence confirmed by the Commander-in-Chief."

"You will insist on it," said Bryan, in reply to the agent, "but—"

"There now, M'Mahon," said the latter, "that will do; good day to you."

"I think it is a very harsh sentence, Fethertonge; will you touch the bell?"

"I don't know, sir," replied the other, ringing as he spoke; "Neville's testimony was very strong against him, and the breaking of the glass did not certainly look like sobriety."

"I had one other word to say, gentlemen," added M'Mahon, "if you'll allow me, now that I'm here."

Fethertonge looked at him with a face in which might be read a painful but friendly rebuke for persisting to speak, after the other had changed the subject. "I rather think Mr. Chevydale would prefer hearing it some other time, Bryan."

"But you know the proverb, sir," said Bryan, smiling, "that there's no time like the present; besides it's only a word."

"What is it?" asked the landlord.

"About the leases, sir," replied M'Mahon, "to know when it would be convanient for you to sign them."

Chevydale looked from Bryan to the agent, and again from the agent to Bryan, as if anxious to understand what the allusion to leases meant. At this moment a servant entered, saying, "The horses are at the door, gentlemen."

"Come some other day, M'Mahon," said Fethertonge; "do you not see that we are going out to ride now—going on our canvass? Come to my office some other day; Mr. Chevydale will remain for a considerable time in the country now, and you need not feel so eager in the matter."

"Yes, come some other day, Mr.—Mr.—ay—M'Mahon; if there are leases to sign, of course I shall sign them; I am always anxious to do my duty as a landlord. Come, or

rather Fethertonge here will manage it. You know I transact no business here; everything is done at his office, unless when he brings me papers to sign. Of course I shall sign any necessary paper."

Bryan then withdrew, after having received another friendly nod of remonstrance, which seemed to say, "Why will you thus persist, when you see that he is not disposed to enter into these matters now? Am I not your friend?" Still, however, he did not feel perfectly at ease with the result of his visit. A slight sense of uncertainty and doubt crept over him, and in spite of every effort at confidence, he found that that which he had placed in Fethertonge, if it did not diminish, was most assuredly not becoming stronger.

CHAPTER XVI.

A Spar Between Kate and Philip Hogan—Bryan M'Mahon is Cautioned against Political Temptation—He Seeks Major Vanston's Interest with the Board of Excise.

The consequences of the calamity which was hanging over Bryan M'Mahon's head, had become now pretty well understood, and occasioned a very general and profound sympathy for the ruin in which it was likely to involve him. Indeed, almost every one appeared to feel it more than he himself did, and many, who on meeting him, were at first disposed to offer him consolation, changed their purpose on witnessing his cheerful and manly bearing under it. Throughout the whole country there was but one family, with another exception, that felt gratified at the blow which had fallen on him. The exception we speak of was no other than Mr Hycy Burke, and the family was that of the Hogans. As for Teddy Phats, he was not the man to trouble himself by the loss of a moment's indifference upon any earthly or other subject, saving and excepting always that it involved the death, mutilation, or destruction in some shape, of his great and relentless foe, the Gauger, whom he looked upon as the impersonation of all that is hateful and villainous in life, and only sent into this world to war with human happiness at large. That great professional instinct, as the French say, and a strong unaccountable disrelish of Hycy Burke, were the only two feelings that disturbed the hardened indifference of his nature.

One night, shortly after Bryan's visit to his landlord, the Hogans and Phats were assembled in the kiln between the hours of twelve and one o'clock, after having drunk nearly three quarts of whiskey among them. The young savages, as usual, after the vagabond depredations or mischievous exercises of the day, were snoring as we have described them before; when Teddy, whom no quantity of liquor could affect beyond a mere inveterate hardness of brogue and an indescribable effort at mirth and melody, exclaimed—"Fwhy, dhen, dat's the stuff; and here's bad luck to him that paid fwor it."

"I'll not drink it, you ugly *keout*," exclaimed Philip, in his deep and ruffianly voice; "but come—all o' yez fill up and drink *my* toast. Come, Kate, you crame of hell's delights, fill till I give it. No," he added abruptly, "I won't drink that, you leprechaun; the man that ped for it is Hycy Burke, and I like Hycy Burke for one thing, an' I'll not dhrink bad luck to him. Come, are yez ready?"

"Give it out, you hulk," said Kate, "an' don't keep us here all night over it."

"Here, then," exclaimed the savage, with a grin of ferocious mirth, distorting his grim colossal features into a smile that was frightful and inhuman—"Here's may Bryan M'Mahon be soon a beggar, an' all his breed the same! Drink it now, all o' yez, or, by the mortal counthryman, I'll brain the first that'll refuse it."

The threat, in this case, was a drunken one, and on that very account the more dangerous.

"Well," said Teddy, "I don't like to drink it; but if——"

"*Honomondiaul!* you d——d disciple," thundered the giant, "down wid it, or I'll split your skull!"

Teddy had it down ere the words were concluded.

"What!" exclaimed Hogan, or rather roared again, as he fastened his blazing eyes on Kate—"what, you yalla mullotty, do *you* dar to refuse?"

"Ay, do *I* dar to refuse!—an' I'd see you fizzin' on the devil's fryin'-pan, where you'll fiz yet, afore I'd dhrink it. Come, come," she replied, her eye blazing now as fiercely as his own, "keep quiet, I bid you—keep calm; you ought to know *me* now, I think."

"Drink it," he shouted, "or I'll brain you."

"Howl him," said Teddy—"howl him; there's murdher in his eye. My soul to happiness but he'll kill her."

"Will he, indeed?" said Bat, with a loud laugh, in which he was joined by Ned—"will he, indeed?" they shouted. "Go on, Kate, you'll get fair play if you want it—*his* eye, Teddy! ay, but look at *her's*, man alive—look at her altogether! Go on, Kate—more power!"

Teddy, on looking at her again, literally retreated a few paces from sheer terror of the tremendous and intrepid fury who now stood before him. It was then for the first time that he observed the huge bones and immense muscular development that stood out into terrible strength by the force of her rising passion. It was the eye, however, and the features of the face which filled him with such an accountable dread. The eyes were literally blazing, and the muscles of the face, now cast into an expression which seemed at the same time to be laughter and fury, were wrought up and blended together in such a way as made the very countenance terrible by the emanation of murder which seemed to break from every feature of it. "Drink it, I say again," shouted Philip. Kate made no reply, but, walking over to where he stood, she looked closely into his eyes, and said, with grinding teeth—"Not if it was to save you from the gallows, where you'll swing yet; but listen." As she spoke her words were hoarse and low, there was a volume of powerful strength in her voice which stunned one like the roar of a lioness. "Here," she exclaimed, her voice now all at once rising or rather shooting up to a most terrific scream —"here's a disgraceful death to Hycy Burke! and may all that's good and prosperous in this world, ay, and in the next, attend Bryan M'Mahon, the honest man! Now, Philip, my man, see how I drink them both." And, having concluded, she swallowed the glass of whiskey, and again drawing her face within an inch of his she glared right into his eyes.

"Howl me," he shouted, "or I'll sthrike, an' we'll have a death in the house."

She raised one hand and waved it behind her, as an intimation that they should not interfere.

The laughter of the brothers now passed all bounds. "No, Kate; go on—we won't interfere. You had better seize him."

"No," she replied, "let him begin first, if he dar."

"Howl me," shouted Philip, "she'll only be killed."

Another peal of laughter was the sole reply given to this by the brothers. "He's goin'," they exclaimed, "he's gone—the white fedher's in him—it's all over wid him —he's afeerd of her, an' not for nothing either—ha! ha! ha! more power, Kate!"

Stung by the contemptuous derision contained in this language, Philip was stepping back in order to give himself proper room for a blow, when, on the very instant that he moved, Kate, uttering something between a howl and a yell, dashed her huge hands into his throat—which was, as is usual with tinkers, without a cravat—and in a moment a desperate and awful struggle took place between them. Strong as Philip was, he found himself placed perfectly on the defensive by the terrific grip which this furious opponent held of his throat. So powerful was it, indeed, that not a single instant was allowed him for the exercise of any aggressive violence against her by a blow, all his strength being directed to unclasp her hands from his throat that he might be permitted to breathe. As they pulled and tugged, however, it was evident that the struggle was going against him—a hoarse, alarming howl once or twice broke from him, that intimated terror and distress on his part.

"That's right, Kate," they shouted, "you have him—press tight—the windpipe's goin' —bravo! he'll soon stagger an' come down, an' then you may do as you like."

They tugged on, and dragged, and panted, with the furious vehemence of the exertion; when at length Philip shouted, in a voice half-stifled by strangulation, "Let g—o—o —o, I—I sa—y—y; ah! ah! ah!"

Bat now ran over in a spirit of glee and triumph that cannot well be described, and clapping his wife on the back, shouted— "Well done, Kate; stick to him for half a minute and he's yours. Bravo! you clip o' perdition, bravo!"

He had scarcely uttered the words when the giant carcass of Philip tottered and fell, dragging Kate along with it, who never for a moment lost or loosened her hold. Her opponent now began to sprawl and kick out his feet from a sense of suffocation, and in attempting to call for assistance, nothing but low, deep gurgling noises could issue from his lips, now livid with the pressure on his throat and covered with foam. His face, too, at all times dark and savage, became literally black, and he uttered such sternutations as, on seeing that they were accompanied by the diminished struggles which betoken exhaustion, induced Teddy to rush over for the purpose of rescuing him from her clutches.

"Aisy," said the others; "let them alone —a little thing will do it now—it's almost over—she has given him his gruel—an' divil's cure to him—he knew well enough what she could do—but he would have it."

Faint convulsive movements were all now that could be noticed in the huge limbs of their brother, and still the savage tigress was at his throat, when her husband at length said:—

"It's time, Ned—it's time—she may carry it too far—he's quiet enough now. Come away, Kate, it's all right—let him alone—let go your hoult of him."

Kate, however, as if she had tasted his blood, would listen to no such language; all the force, and energies, and bloody instincts of the incarnate fury were aroused within her, and she still stuck to her victim.

"Be japers she'll kill him," shouted Bat, rushing to her; "come, Ned, till we unclasp her—take care—pull quickly—bloody wars, he's dead!—Kate, you divil!—you fury of hell! let go—let go, I say."

Kate, however, heard him not, but still tugged and stuck to the throat of Philip's quivering carcass, until by a united effort they at length disentangled her iron clutches from it, upon which she struggled and howled like a beast of prey, and attempted with a strength that seemed more akin to the emotion of a devil than that of a woman to get at him again and again, in order to complete her work.

"Come, Kate," said her husband, "you're a Trojan—by japers you're a Trojan; you've settled him any way—is there life in him?" he asked, "if there is, dash wather or something in his face, an' drag him up out o' that—ha! ha! Well done, Kate; only for you we'd lead a fine life wid him—ay! an' a fine life that is—a hard life we led until you did come—there now, more power to you—by the livin' Counthryman, there's not your aquil in Europe—come now, settle down, an' don't keep all movin' that way as if you wor at him again—sit down now, an' here's another glass of whiskey for you."

In the mean time, Ned and Teddy Phats succeeded in recovering Philip, whom they dragged over and placed upon a kind of bench, where in a few minutes he recovered sufficiently to be able to speak—but ever and anon he shook his head, and stretched his neck, and drew his breath deeply, putting his hands up from time to time as if he strove to set his windpipe more at ease.

"Here Phil, my hairo," said his triumphant brother Bat, "take another glass, an' may be for all so strong and murdherin' as you are wid others you now know—an' you knew before what our woman can do at home wid you."

"I've—hoch—hoch—I've done wid her—she's no woman; there's a devil in her, an' if you take my advice, it's to Priest M'Scaddhan you'd bring her, an' have the same devil prayed out of her—I that could murdher ere a man in the parist a'most!"

"Lave Bryan M'Mahon out," said Kate.

"No I won't," replied Phil, sullenly, and with a voice still hoarse, "no, I won't—I that could make smash of ere a man in the parish, to be throttled into perdition by a blasted woman. She's a devil, I say; for the last ten minutes I seen nothin' but fire, fire, fire, as red as blazes, an' I hard somethin' yellin', yellin', in my ears."

"Ay!" replied Kate, "I know you did—that was the fire of hell you seen, ready to resave you; an' the noise you hard was the voices of the devils that wor comin' for your sowl—ay, an' the voices of the two wives you murdhered—take care then, or I'll send you sooner to hell than you dhrame of."

The scowl which she had in return for this threat was beyond all description.

"Oh, I have done wid you," he replied; "you're not right, I say—but never mind, I'll put a pin in M'Mahon's collar for this—ay will I."

"Don't!" she exclaimed, in one fearful monosyllable, and then she added in a low condensed whisper, "or if you do, mark the consequence."

"Trot, Phil," said Teddy, "I think you needn't throuble your head about M'Mahon—he's done fwhor."

"An' mark me," said Kate, "I'll take care of the man that done for him. I know him well, betther than he suspects, an' can make him sup sorrow whenever I like—an' would, too, only for one thing."

"An' fwhat's dhat wan thing?" asked Phats.

"You'll know it when you're ouldher, may be," replied Kate; "but you must be ouldher first—I can keep my own secrets, thank God, an' will, too—only mark me all o' yez; you know well what I am—let no injury come to Bryan M'Mahon. For the sake of one person he must be safe."

"Well," observed Teddy, "let us hear no more about them; it's all settled that we are to set up in Glen Dearg above again—for this Hycy,—who's sthrivin' to turn the penny where he can."

"It is," said Bat; "an' to-morrow night, let us bring the things up—this election will sarve us at any rate—but who will come in?" *

"The villain of hell!" suddenly exclaimed Kate, as if to herself; "to go to ruin the young man! That girl's breakin' her heart for what has happened."

"What are you talkin' about?" asked her husband.

"Nothing," she replied; "only if you all intend to have any rest to-night, throw yourselves in the shake-down there, an' go sleep. I'm not to sit up the whole night here, I hope?"

Philip, and Ned, and Teddy tumbled themselves into the straw, and in a few minutes were in a state of perfect oblivion.

"Hycy Burke is a bad boy, Bat," she said,

* That is, be returned.

as the husband was about to follow their example; "but he is marked—I've set my mark upon him."

"You appear to know something particular about him," observed her husband.

"Maybe I do, an' maybe I don't," she replied; "but I tell you, he's marked—that's all—go to bed now."

He tumbled after the rest, Kate stretched herself in an opposite corner, and in a few minutes this savage orchestra was in full chorus.

What an insoluble enigma is woman! From the specimen of feminine delicacy and modest diffidence which we have just presented to the reader, who would imagine that Kate Hogan was capable of entering into the deep and rooted sorrow which Kathleen Cavanagh experienced when made acquainted with the calamity which was about to crush her lover. Yet so it was. In truth this fierce and furious woman who was at once a thief, a liar, a drunkard, and an impostor, hardened in wickedness and deceit, had in spite of all this a heart capable of virtuous aspirations, and of loving what was excellent and good. It is true she was a hypocrite herself, yet she detested Hycy Burke for his treachery. She was a thief and a liar, yet she liked and respected Bryan M'Mahon for his truth and honesty. Her heart, however, was not *all* depraved; and, indeed, it is difficult to meet a woman in whose disposition, however corrupted by evil society, and degraded by vice, there is not to be found a portion of the angelic essence still remaining. In the case before us, however, this may be easily accounted for. Kate Hogan, though a hell-cat and devil, when provoked, was, amidst all her hardened violence and general disregard of truth and honesty, a virtuous woman and a faithful wife. Hence her natural regard for much that was good and pure, and her strong sympathy with the sorrow which now fell upon Kathleen Cavanagh.

Kathleen and her sister had been sitting sewing at the parlor window, on the day Bryan had the interview we have detailed with Chevydale and the agent, when they heard their father's voice inquiring for Hanna.

"He has been at Jemmy Burke's, Kathleen," said her sister, "and I'll wager a nosegay, if one could get one, that he has news of this new sweetheart of yours; he's bent, Kathleen," she added, "to have you in Jemmy Burke's family, cost what it may."

"So it seems, Hanna."

"They say Edward Burke is still a finer-looking young fellow than Hycy. Now, Kathleen," she added, laughing, "if you should spoil a priest afther all! Well! unlikelier things have happened."

"That may be," replied Kathleen, "but this won't happen for all that, Hanna. Go, there he's calling for you again."

"Yes—yes," she shouted; "throth, among you all, Kathleen, you're making a regular go-between of me. My father thinks I can turn you round my finger, and Bryan M'Mahon thinks—yes, I'm goin'," she answered again. "Well, keep up your spirits; I'll soon have news for you about this spoiled priest."

"Poor Hanna," thought Kathleen; "where was there ever such a sister? She does all she can to keep my spirits up; but it can't be. How can I see him ruined and beggared, that had the high spirit and the true heart?"

Hanna, her father, and mother, held a tolerably long discussion together, in which Kathleen could only hear the tones of their voices occasionally. It was evident, however, by the emphatic intonations of the old couple, that they were urging some certain point, which her faithful sister was deprecating, sometimes, as Kathleen could learn, by seriousness, and at other times by mirth. At length she returned with a countenance combating between seriousness and jest; the seriousness, however, predominating.

"Kathleen," said she, "you never had a difficulty before you until now. They haven't left me a leg to stand upon. Honest Jemmy never had any wish to make Edward a priest, and he tells my father that it was all a trick of the wife to get everything for her favorite; and he's now determined to disappoint them. What will you do?"

"What would you recommend me?" asked Kathleen, looking at her with something of her own mood, for although her brow was serious, yet there was a slight smile upon her lips.

"Why," said the frank and candid girl, "certainly to run away with Bryan M'Mahon; that, you know, would settle everything."

"Would it settle my father's heart," said Kathleen, "and my mother's?—would it settle my own character?—would it be the step that all the world would expect from Kathleen Cavanagh?—and putting all the world aside, would it be a step that I could take in the sight of God, my dear Hanna?"

"Kathleen, forgive me, darlin'," said her sister, throwing her arms about her neck, and laying her head upon her shoulder; "I'm a foolish, flighty creature; indeed, I don't know what's to be done, nor I can't advise you. Come out and walk about; the day's dry an' fine."

"If your head makes fifty mistakes," said her sister, "your heart's an excuse for them all; but you don't make any mistakes,

Hanna, when you're in earnest; instead of that your head's worth all our heads put together. Come, now."

They took the Carriglass road, but had not gone far when they met Dora M'Mahon who, as she said, "came down to ask them up a while, as the house was now so lonesome;" and she added, with artless naivete, "I don't know how it is, Kathleen, but I love you better now than I ever did before. Ever since my darlin' mother left us, I can't look upon you as a stranger, and now that poor Bryan's in distress, my heart clings to you more and more."

Hanna, the generous Hanna's eyes partook of the affection and admiration which beamed in Dora's, as they rested on Kathleen; but notwithstanding this, she was about to give Dora an ironical chiding for omitting to say anything gratifying to herself, when happening to look back, she saw Bryan at the turn of the road approaching them.

"Here's a friend of ours," she exclaimed; "no less than Bryan M'Mahon himself. Come, Dora, we can't go up to Carriglass, but we'll walk back with you a piece o' the way."

Bryan, who was then on his return from Chevydale's, soon joined them, and they proceeded in the direction of his father's, Dora and Hanna having, with good-humored consideration, gone forward as an advanced guard, leaving Bryan and Kathleen to enjoy their tête-à-tête behind them.

"Dear Kathleen," said Bryan, "I was very anxious to see you. You've h'ard of this unfortunate business that has come upon me?"

"I have," she replied, "and I need not say that I'm sorry for it. Is it, or will it be as bad as they report?"

"Worse, Kathleen. I will have the fine for all Ahadarra to pay myself."

"But can nothing be done. Wouldn't they let you off when they come to hear that, although the Still was found upon your land, yet it wasn't yours, nor it wasn't you that was usin' it?"

"I don't know how that may be. Hycy Burke tells me that they'll be apt to reduce the fine, if I send them a petition or memorial, or whatever they call it, an' he's to have one written for me to-morrow."

"I'm afraid Hycy's a bad authority for anybody, Bryan."

"I don't think you do poor Hycy justice, Kathleen; he's not, in my opinion, so bad as you think him. I don't know a man, nor I haven't met a man that's sorrier for what has happened me. He came to see me yesterday, and to know in what way he could serve me, an' wasn't called upon to do so."

"I hope you're right, Bryan; for why should I wish Hycy Burke to be a bad man, or why should I wish him ill? I may be mistaken in him, and I hope I am."

"Indeed, I think you are, Kathleen; he's wild a good deal, I grant, and has a spice of mischief in him, and many a worthy young fellow has both."

"That's very true," she replied; "however, we have h'ard bad enough of him. There's none of us what we ought to be, Bryan. If you're called upon to pay this fine, what will be the consequence?"

"Why, that I'll have to give up my farm —that I won't be left worth sixpence."

"Who put the still up in Ahadarra?" she inquired. "Is it true that it was the Hogan's?"

"Indeed I believe there's no doubt about it," he replied; "since I left the landlord's, I have heard what satisfies me that it was them and Teddy Phats."

Kathleen paused and sighed. "They are a vile crew," she added, after a little; "but be they what they may, they're faithful and honest, and affectionate to our family; an' that, I believe, is the only good about them. Bryan, I am very sorry for this misfortune that has come upon you. I am sorry for your own sake."

"And I," replied Bryan, "am sorry for— I was goin' to say—yours; but it would be, afther all, for my own. I haven't the same thoughts of you now, dear Kathleen."

She gazed quickly, and with some surprise at him, and asked, "Why so, Bryan?"

"I'm changed—I'm a ruined man," he replied; "I had bright hopes of comfort and happiness—hopes that I doubt will never come to pass. However," he added, recovering himself, and assuming a look of cheerfulness, "who knows if everything will turn out so badly as we fear?"

"That's the spirit you ought to show," returned Kathleen; "You have before you the example of a good father; don't be cast down, nor look at the dark side; but you said you had not the same thoughts of me just now; I don't understand you."

"Do you think," he replied, with a smile, "that I meant to say my affection for you was changed? Oh, no, Kathleen; but that my situation is changed, or soon will be so; and that on that account we can't be the same thing to one another that we have been."

"Bryan," she replied, "you may always depend upon this, that so long as you are true to your God and to yourself, I will be true to you. Depend upon this once and forever."

"Kathleen, that's like yourself, but I could

not think of bringing you to shame." He paused, and turning his eyes full upon her, added—"I'm allowin' myself to sink again. Everything will turn out better than we think, plaise God."

"I hope so," she added, "but whatever happens, Bryan, do you always act an open, honest, manly part, as I know you will do; act always so as that your conscience can't accuse you, or make you feel that you have done anything that is wrong, or unworthy, or disgraceful; and then, dear Bryan, welcome poverty may you say, as I will welcome Bryan M'Mahon with it."

Both had paused for a little on their way, and stood for about a minute moved by the interest which each felt in what the other uttered. As Bryan's eye rested on the noble features and commanding figure of Kathleen, he was somewhat started by the glow of enthusiasm which lit both her eye and her cheek, although he was too unskilled in the manifestations of character to know that it was enthusiasm she felt.

They then proceeded, and after a short silence Bryan observed—"Dear Kathleen, I know the value of the advice you are giving me, but will you let me ask if you ever seen anything in my conduct, or heard anything in my conversation, that makes you think it so necessary to give it to me?"

"If I ever had, Bryan, it's not likely I'd be here at your side this day to give it to you; but you're now likely to be brought into trials and difficulties—into temptation—and it is then that you may think maybe of what I'm sayin' now."

"Well, Kathleen," he replied, smiling, "you're determined at all events that the advice will come before the temptation; but, indeed, my own dearest girl, my heart this moment is proud when I think that you are so full of truth, an' feelin', and regard for me, as to give me such advice, and to be able to give it. But still I hope I won't stand in need of it, and that if the temptations you spoke of come in my way, I will have your advice—ay, an' I trust in God the adviser, too—to direct me."

"Are you sure, Bryan," and she surveyed him closely as she spoke—"are you sure that no part of the temptation has come across you already?"

He looked surprised as she asked him this singular question. "I am," said he; "but, dear Kathleen, I can't rightly understand you. What temptations do you mane?"

"Have you not promised to vote for Mr. Vanston, the Tory candidate, who never in his life voted for your religion or your liberty?"

"Do you mane me, dearest Kathleen?"

"You, certainly; who else could I mean when I ask you the question?"

"Why, I never promised to vote for Vanston," he replied; "an' what is more—but who said I did?"

"On the day before yesterday," she proceeded, "two gentlemen came to our house to canvass votes, and they stated plainly that you had promised to vote for them—that is for Vanston."

"Well, Kathleen, all I can say is, that the statement is not true. I didn't promise for Vanston, and they did not even ask me. Are you satisfied now? or whether will you believe them or me?"

"I am satisfied, dear Bryan; I am more than satisfied; for my heart is easy. Misfortune! what signifies mere misfortune, or the loss of a beggarly farm?"

"But, my darling Kathleen, it is anything but a beggarly farm."

Kathleen, however, heard him not, but proceeded. "What signifies poverty, Bryan, or struggle, so long as the heart is right, and the conscience clear and without a spot? Nothing—oh, nothing! As God is to judge me, I would rather beg my bread with you as an honest man, true, as I said awhile ago, to your God and your religion, than have an estate by your side, if you could prove false to either."

The vehemence with which she uttered these sentiments, and the fire which animated her whole mind and manner, caused them to pause again, and Bryan, to whom this high enthusiasm was perfectly new, now saw with something like wonder, that the tears were flowing down her cheeks.

He caught her hand and said "My own darling Kathleen, the longer I know you the more I see your value; but make your mind easy; when I become a traitor to either God or my religion, you may renounce me!"

"Don't be surprised at these tears, Bryan; don't, my dear Bryan; for you may look upon them as a proof of how much I love you, and what I would feel if the man I love should do anything unworthy, or treacherous, to his religion or his suffering country."

"How could I," he replied, "with my own dear Kathleen, that will be a guardian angel to me, to advise and guide me? Well, now that your mind is aisy, Kathleen, mine I think is brighter, too. I have no doubt but we'll be happy yet—at least I trust in God we will. Who knows but everything may prove betther than our expectations; and as you say, they may make a poor man of me, and ruin me, but so long as I can keep my good name, and am true to my country, and my God, I can never complain."

CHAPTER XVII.

Interview between Hycy and Finigan—The Former Proposes for Miss Clinton—A love Scene.

Hycy, after his conversation with Bryan M'Mahon, felt satisfied that he had removed all possible suspicion from himself, but at the same time he ransacked his mind in order to try who it was that had betrayed him to Bryan. The Hogans he had no reason to suspect, because from experience he knew them to be possessed of a desperate and unscrupulous fidelity, in excellent keeping with their savage character; and to suspect Teddy Phats, was to suppose that an inveterate and incurable smuggler would inform upon him. After a good deal of cogitation, he at length came to the conclusion that the school-master, Finigan, must have been the traitor, and with this impression he resolved to give that worthy personage a call upon his way home. He found him as usual at full work, and as usual, also, in that state which is commonly termed half drunk, a state, by the way, in which the learned pedagogue generally contrived to keep himself night and day. Hycy did not enter his establishment, but after having called him once or twice to no purpose—for such was the din of the school that his voice could not penetrate it—he at length knocked against the half open door, which caused him to be both seen and heard more distinctly. On seeing him, the school-master got to his limbs, and was about to address him, when Hycy said—

"Finigan, I wish to speak a few words to you."

"O'Finigan, sir—O'Finigan, Mr. Burke. It is enough, sir, to be deprived of our hereditary territories, without being clipped of our names; they should lave us those at all events unmutilated. O'Finigan, therefore, Mr. Burke, whenever you address me, if you plaise."

"Well, Mr. O'Finigan," continued Hycy, "if not inconvenient, I should wish to speak a few words with you."

"No inconvenience in the world, Mr. Burke; I am always disposed to oblige my friends whenever I can do so wid propriety. My advice, sir, my friendship, and my purse, are always at their service. My advice to guide them—my friendship to sustain—and my purse—hem!—ha, ha, ha—I think I may clap a payriod or full stop there," he added, laughing, "inasmuch as the last approaches very near to what philosophers term a vacuum or nonentity. Gintlemen," he proceeded, addressing the scholars, "I am going over to Lanty Hanratty's for a while to enjoy a social cup wid Mr. Burke here, and as that fact will cause the existence of a short *interegnum*, I now publicly appoint Gusty Carney as my *locum tenens* until I resume the reins of government on my return. Gusty, put the names of all offenders down on a slate, and when I return '*condign*' is the word; an' see, Gusty—mark me well—no bribery—no bread nor buttons, nor any other materials of corruption from the culprits—otherwise you shall become their substitute in the castigation, and I shall teach you to look one way and feel another, my worthy con-disciple."

"Now, Finigan—I beg your pardon—O'Finigan," said Hycy, when they were seated in the little back tap-room of the public-house with refreshments before them, "I think I have reason to be seriously displeased with you."

"Displeased with me!" exclaimed his companion; "and may I take the liberty to interrogate wherefore, Mr. Hycy?"

"You misrepresented me to Bryan M'Mahon," said Hycy.

"Upon what grounds and authority do you spake, sir?" asked Finigan, whose dignity was beginning to take offence.

"I have good grounds and excellent authority for what I say," replied Hycy. "You have acted a very dishonorable part, Mr. Finigan, and the consequence is that I have ceased to be your friend."

"*I* act a dishonorable part. Why, sir, I scorn the imputation; but *how* have I acted a dishonorable part? that's the point."

"You put Bryan M'Mahon upon his guard against me, and consequently left an impression on his mind that I was his enemy."

"Well," said the other, with a good deal of irony, "that is good! Have I, indeed? And pray, Mr. Burke, who says so?"

"I have already stated that my authority for it is good."

"But you must name you authority, sir, no lurking assassin shall be permitted wid impunity to stab my fair reputation wid the foul dagger of calumny and scandal. Name your authority, sir?"

"I could do so."

"Well, sir, why don't you? Let me hear the name of the illiterate miscreant, whoever he is, that has dared to tamper with my unblemished fame."

"All I ask you," continued Hycy, "is to candidly admit the fact, and state why you acted as you did."

"Name your authority, sir, and then I shall speak. Perhaps I did, and perhaps I did not; but when you name your authority I shall then give you a more satisfactory reply. That's the language—the elevated language—of a gentleman, Mr. Burke."

"My authority then is no other than Bryan M'Mahon himself," replied Hycy, "who told me that he was cautioned against me; so that I hope you're now satisfied."

"Mr. Burke," replied Finigan, assuming a lofty and impressive manner, "I have known the M'Mahons for better than forty years; so, in fact, has the country around them; and until the present moment I never heard that a deliberate falsehood, or any breach of truth whatsoever, was imputed to any one of them. Tom M'Mahon's simple word was never doubted, and would pass aquil to many a man's oath; and it is the same thing wid the whole family, man and women. They are proverbial, sir, for truth and integrity, and a most spontaneous effusion of candor under all circumstances. You will pardon me then, Mr. Hycy, if I avow a trifle of heresy in this matter. You are yourself, wid great respect be it spoken, sometimes said to sport your imagination occasionally, and to try your hand wid considerable success at a *lapsus veritatis*. Pardon me, then, if I think it somewhat more probable that you have just now stated what an ould instructor of mine used to call a moral thumper; excuse me, I say; and at all events I have the pleasure of drinking your health; and if my conjecture be appropriate, here's also a somewhat closer adhesion to the *veritas* aforesaid to you!"

"Do you mean to insinuate that I'm stating what is not true?" said Burke, assuming an offended look, which, however, he did not feel.

"No, sir," replied Finigan, retorting his look with one of indignant scorn, "far be it from me to insinuate any such thing. I broadly, and in all the latitudinarianism of honest indignation, assert that it is a d—d lie, begging your pardon, and drinking to your moral improvement a second time; and ere you respond to what I've said, it would be as well, in order to have the matter copiously discussed, if you ordhered in a fresh supply of liquor, and help yourself, for, if the proverb be true—*in vino veritas*—there it is again, but truth will be out, you see—who knows but we may come to a thrifle of it from you yet? Ha! ha! ha! Excuse the jest, Mr. Hycy. You remember little Horace,—

"'Quid vetat ridentem dicere verum?'"

"Do you mean to say, sirra," said Hycy, "that I have stated a lie?"

"I mean to say that whoever asserts that I misrepresented you in any way to Bryan M'Mahon, or ever cautioned him against you, states a lie of the first magnitude—a moral thumper of gigantic dimensions."

"Well, will you tell me what you *did* say to him?"

"What I *did* say," echoed Finigan. "Well," he added, after a pause, during which he surveyed Hycy pretty closely—having now discovered that he was, in fact, only proceeding upon mere suspicion—"I believe I must acknowledge a portion of the misrepresentation. I must, on secondary consideration, plead guilty to that fact."

"I thought as much," said Hycy.

"Here then," proceeded Finigan, with a broad and provoking grin upon his coarse but humorous features, "here, Mr. Hycy, is what I did say—says I, 'Bryan, I have a word to say to you, touching an accomplished young gentleman, a friend of yours.'

"'What is that?' asked the worthy Bernardus.

"'It is regarding the all-accomplished Mr. Hyacinthus Burke,' I replied, 'who is a *homo factus ad unguem*. Mr. Burke, Bryan,' I proceeded, 'is a gentleman in the—hem—true sense of that word. He is generous, candid, faithful, and honest; and in association wid all his other excellent qualities, he is celebrated, among the select few who know him best, for an extraordinary attachment to—truth.' Now, if that wasn't misrepresentation, Mr. Hycy, I don't know what was. Ha! ha! ha!"

"You're half drunk," replied Hycy, "or I should rather say whole drunk, I think, and scarcely know what you're saying; or rather, I believe you're a bit of a knave, Mr. O'Finigan."

"Thanks, sir; many thanks for the prefix. Proceed."

"I have nothing more to add," replied Hycy, rising up and preparing to go.

"Ay," said Finigan, with another grin, "a bit of a knave, am I? Well, now, isn't it better to be only a bit of a knave than a knave all out—a knave in full proportions, from top to toe, from head to heel—like some accomplished gentlemen that I have the honor of being acquainted wid. But in the meantime, now, don't be in a hurry, man alive, nor look as if you were fatted on vinegar. Sit down again; ordher in another libation, and I shall make a disclosure that will be worth your waiting for."

"You shall have the libation, as you call it, at all events," said Hycy, resuming his seat, but feeling, at the same time, by no means satisfied with the lurking grin which occasionally played over Finigan's features.

After much chat and banter, and several attempts on the part of Hycy to insinuate himself into the pedagogue's confidence, he at length rose to go. His companion was now in that state which strongly borders on in-

ebriety, and he calculated that if it were possible to worm anything out of him, he was now in the best condition for it. Every effort, however, was in vain; whenever he pressed the schoolmaster closely, the vague, blank expression of intoxication disappeared for a moment, and was replaced by the broad, humorous ridicule, full of self-possession and consciousness, which always characterized Finigan, whether drunk or sober. The man was naturally cunning, and ranked among a certain class of topers who can be made drunk to a certain extent, and upon some particular subjects, but who, beyond that, and with these limitations, defy the influence of liquor.

Hycy Burke was one of those men who, with smart and showy qualities and great plausibility of manner, was yet altogether without purpose or steadfast principle in the most ordinary affairs of life. He had no fixed notions upon either morals, religion, or politics; and when we say so, we may add, that he was equally without motive—that is, without *adequate* motive, in almost everything he did.

The canvass was now going on with great zeal on the part of Chevydale and Vanston. Sometimes Hycy was disposed to support the one and sometimes the other, but as to feeling a firm attachment to the cause or principles of either, it was not in his nature.

Indeed, the approach of a general election is at all times calculated to fill the heart of a thinking man with a strong sense of shame for his kind, and of sorrow for the unreasoning and brutal tendency to slavery and degradation which it exhibits. Upon this occasion the canvass, in consequence of the desperate struggle that must ensue, owing to the equality of the opposing forces, was a remarkably early one. Party feeling and religious animosity, as is usual, ran very high, each having been made the mere stalking-horse or catchword of the rival candidates, who cared nothing, or at least very little, about the masses on either side, provided always that they could turn them to some advantage.

It was one morning after the canvass had been going forward with great activity on both sides for about a week, that Hycy, who now felt himself rather peculiarly placed, rode down to Clinton's for the purpose of formally paying his addresses to the gauger's interesting niece, and, if possible, ascertaining his fate from her own lips. His brother Edward had now been brought home in accordance with the expressed determination of his father, with whom he was, unquestionably, a manifest favorite, a circumstance which caused Hycy to detest him, and also deprived him in a great degree of his mother's affections. Hycy had now resolved to pay his *devoirs* to Kathaleen Cavanagh, as a *dernier resort*, in the event of his failing with Miss Clinton; for, as regarding affection, he had no earthly conception what it meant. With this view he rode down to Clinton's as we said, and met Harry coming out of the stable.

"Harry," said he, after his horse was put up, "I am about to ask an interview with your sister."

"I don't think she will grant it," replied her brother, "you are by no means a favorite with her; however, you can try; perhaps she may. You know the old adage, '*varium et mutabile semper.*' Who knows but she may have changed her mind?"

"Is your uncle within?" asked Hycy.

"No," replied his nephew, "he's gone to Fethertonge's upon some election business."

"Could you not contrive," said Hycy, "to leave her and me together, then, and allow me to ascertain what I am to expect?"

"Come in," said Harry—"never say it again. If I can I will."

Hycy, as we have stated before, had vast confidence in his own powers of persuasion and general influence with women, and on this occasion, his really handsome features were made vulgar by a smirk of self-conceit which he could not conceal, owing to his natural vanity and a presentiment of success that is almost inseparable from persons of his class, who can scarcely look even upon the most positive and decided rejection by a woman as coming seriously from her heart. Even Harry Clinton himself, though but a young man, thought, as he afterwards stated to his sister, that he never saw Hycy have so much the appearance of a puppy as upon that occasion. As had been proposed, he withdrew, however, and the lover being left in the drawing-room with Miss Clinton began, with a simper that was rather coxcombical, to make allusions to the weather, but in such a way as if there was some deep but delightful meaning veiled under his commonplaces. At length he came directly to the point.

"But passing from the weather, Miss Clinton, to a much more agreeable topic, permit me to ask if you have ever turned your thoughts upon matrimony?"

The hectic of a moment, as Sterne says, accompanied by a look that slightly intimated displeasure, or something like it, was the only reply he received for a quarter of a minute, when she said, after the feeling probably had passed away—"No, indeed, Mr. Burke, I have not."

"Come, come, Miss Clinton," said Hycy,

[illegible] won't pass. Is it [illegible] philosophers that you [illegible] from the time you are [illegible]

[illegible] philosophers?"

[illegible] by the philosophers in [illegible]

[illegible] aware of that," she replied; [illegible] have so ruled it, I see no [illegible] can draw from that, except [illegible] subject."

[illegible] however," said Hycy, "and [illegible] against you."

[illegible] should, Mr. Burke, pro[illegible] truth with us."

[illegible] indeed, Miss Clinton—that [illegible] but seriously, have you ever [illegible] marriage?"

[illegible] philosophy say that we seldom [illegible] anything else?" she replied, smil[illegible] philosophy, then."

[illegible] really is a subject in which I [illegible] particular interest—a personal inter[illegible] but as for philosophy, I despise it—[illegible] it is usually understood. The only [illegible] philosophy of life is love, and that is my doc[illegible]."

"Is that your only doctrine?"

"Pretty nearly; but it is much the same as that which appears in the world under the different disguises of religion."

"I trust you do not mean to assert that love and religion are the same thing, Mr. Burke?"

"I do; the terms are purely convertible. Love is the universal religion of man, and he is most religious who feels it most; that is your only genuine piety. For instance, I am myself in a most exalted state of that same piety this moment, and have been so for a considerable time past."

Miss Clinton felt a good deal embarrassed by the easy profligacy that was expressed in these sentiments, and she made an effort to change the subject.

"Are you taking part in the canvass which is going on in the country, Mr. Burke?"

"Not much," said he; "I despise politics as much as I cherish the little rosy god; but really, Miss Clinton, I feel anxious to know your opinions on marriage, and you have not stated them. Do you not think the nuptial state the happiest?"

"It's a subject I feel no inclination whatsoever to discuss, Mr. Burke; it is a subject which, personally speaking, has never occupied from me one moment's thought; and, having said so much, I trust you will have the goodness to select some other topic for conversation."

"But I am so circumstanced, just now, Miss Clinton, that I cannot really change it. The truth is, that I have felt very much attached to you for some time past—upon my word and honor I have: it's a fact, I assure you, Miss Clinton; and I now beg to make you a tender of myself and—and—of all I am possessed of. I am a most ardent admirer of yours; and the utmost extent of my ambition is to become an accepted one. Do then, my dear Miss Clinton, allow me the charming privilege—pray, do."

"What will be the consequence if I do not?" she replied, smiling.

"Upon my word and honor, I shall go nearly distracted, and get quite melancholy; my happiness depends upon you, Miss Clinton; you are a very delightful girl, quite a nonpareil, and I trust you will treat me with kindness and consideration."

"Mr. Burke," replied the lady, "I am much obliged for the preference you express for me; but whether you are serious or in jest, I can only say that I have no notion of matrimony; that I have never had any notion of it; and that I can safely say, I have never seen the man whom I should wish to call my husband. You will oblige me very much, then, if in future you forbear to introduce this subject. Consider it a forbidden one, so far as I am concerned, for I feel quite unworthy of so gifted and accomplished a gentleman as Mr. Burke."

"You will not discard me surely, Miss Clinton?"

"On that subject, unquestionably."

"No, no, my dear Miss Clinton, you will not say so; do not be so cruel; you will distress me greatly, I assure you. I am very much deficient in firmness, and your cruelty will afflict me and depress my spirits."

"I trust not, Mr. Burke. Your spirits are naturally good, and I have no doubt but you will ultimately overcome this calamity—at least I sincerely hope so."

"Ah, Miss Clinton, you little know the heart I have, nor my capacity for feeling; my feelings, I assure you, are exceedingly tender, and I get quite sunk under disappointment. Come, Miss Clinton, you must not deprive me altogether of hope; it is too cruel. Do not say no forever."

The arch girl shook her head with something of mock solemnity, and replied, "I must indeed, Mr. Burke; the fatal *no* must be pronounced, and in connection with *forever* too; and unless you have much virtue to sustain you, I fear you run a great risk of dying a martyr to a negative. I would fain hope, however, that the virtue I allude to, and your well-known sense of religion, will support you under such a trial."

This was uttered in a tone of grave ironical sympathy that not only gave it peculiar se-

verity, but intimated to Hycy that his character was fully understood.

"Well, Miss Clinton," said he, rising with a countenance in which there was a considerable struggle between self-conceit and mortification, a struggle which in fact was exceedingly ludicrous in its effect, "I must only hope that you probably may change your mind."

"Mr. Burke," said she, with a grave and serious dignity that was designed to terminate the interview, "there are subjects upon which a girl of delicacy and principle never *can* change her mind, and this I feel obliged to say, once for all, is one of them. I am now my uncle's housekeeper," she added, taking up a bunch of keys, "and you must permit me to wish you a good morning," saying which, with a cool but very polite inclination of her head, she dismissed Hycy the accomplished, who cut anything but a dignified figure as he withdrew.

"Well," said her brother, who was reading a newspaper in the parlor, "is the report favorable?"

"No," replied Hycy, "anything but favorable. I fear, Harry, you have not played me fair in this business."

"How is that?" asked the other, rather quickly.

"I fear you've prejudiced your sister against me, and that instead of giving me a clear stage, you gave me the 'no favor' portion of the adage only."

"I am not in the habit of stating a falsehood, Hycy, nor of having any assertion I make questioned; I have already told you, I think, that I would not prejudice my sister against you. I now repeat that I have not done so; but I cannot account for her prejudices against you any more than I shall attempt to contradict or combat them, so far from that I now tell you, that if she were unfortunately disposed to marry you, I would endeavor to prevent her."

"And pray why so, Harry, if it is a fair question?"

"Perfectly fair; simply because I should not wish to see my sister married to a man unburthened with any kind of principle. In fact, without the slightest intention whatsoever, Hycy, to offer you offence, I must say that you are not the man to whom I should entrust Maria's peace and happiness; I am her only brother, and have a right to speak as I do. I consider it my duty."

"Certainly," replied Hycy, "if you think so, I cannot blame you; but I see clearly that you misunderstand my character—that is all."

They separated in a few minutes afterwards, and Hycy in a very serious and irritable mood rode homewards. In truth his prospects at this peculiar period were anything but agreeable. Here his love-suit, if it could be called so, had just been rejected by Miss Clinton, in a manner that utterly precluded all future hope in that quarter. With Kathleen Cavanagh he had been equally unsuccessful. His brother Edward was now at home, too, a favorite with, and inseparable from his father, who of late maintained any intercourse that took place between himself and Hycy, with a spirit of cool, easy sarcasm, that was worse than anger itself. His mother, also, in consequence of her unjustifiable attempts to defend her son's irregularities, had lost nearly all influence with her husband, and if the latter should withdraw, as he had threatened to do, the allowance of a hundred a year with which he supplied him, he scarcely saw on what hand he could turn. With Kathleen Cavanagh and Miss Clinton he now felt equally indignant, nor did his friend Harry escape a strong portion of his ill-will. Hycy, not being overburthened with either a love or practice of truth himself, could not for a moment yield credence to the assertion of young Clinton, that he took no steps to prejudice his sister against him. He took it for granted, therefore, that it was to his interference he owed the reception he had just got, and he determined in some way or other to repay him for the ill-services he had rendered him.

The feeling of doubt and uncertainty with which Bryan M'Mahon parted from his landlord and Fethertonge, the agent, after the interview we have already described, lost none of their strength by time. Hycy's memorial had been entrusted to Chevydale, who certainly promised to put his case strongly before the Commissioners of Excise; and Bryan at first had every reason to suppose that he would do so. Whether in consequence of that negligence of his promise, for which he was rather remarkable, or from some sinister influence that may have been exercised over him, it is difficult to say, but the fact was that Bryan had now only ten days between him and absolute ruin. He had taken the trouble to write to the Secretary of Excise to know if his memorial had been laid before them, and supported by Mr. Chevydale, who, he said, knew the circumstances, and received a reply, stating that no such memorial had been sent, and that Mr. Chevydale had taken no steps in the matter whatsoever. We shall not now enter into a detail of all the visits he had made to his landlord, whom he could never see a second time, however, notwithstanding repeated solicitations to that effect. Fethertonge he did

see, and always was assured by him that his case was safe and in good hands.

"You are quite mistaken, Bryan," said he, "if you think that either he or I have any intention of neglecting your affair. You know yourself, however, that he has not a moment for anything at the present time but this confounded election. The contest will be a sharp one, but when it is over we will take care of you."

"Yes, but it will then be too late," replied Bryan; "I will be then a ruined man."

"But, my dear Bryan, will you put no confidence in your friends? I tell you you will not be ruined. If they follow up the matter so as to injure you, we shall have the whole affair overhauled, and justice done you; otherwise we shall bring it before Parliament."

"That may be all very well," replied Bryan, "but it is rather odd that he has not taken a single step in it yet."

"The memorial is before the Board," said the other, "for some time, and we expect an answer every day."

"But I know to the contrary," replied Bryan, "for here is a letther from the Secretary stating that no such memorial ever came before them."

"Never mind that," replied Fethertonge, "*he* may not have seen it. The Secretary! Lord bless you, he never reads a tenth of the memorials that go in. Show me the letter. See there now—he did not write it all; don't you see his signatnre is in a different hand? Why will you not put confidence in your friends, Bryan?"

"Because," replied the independent and honest young fellow, "I don't think they're entitled to it from me. They have neglected my business very shamefully, after having led me to think otherwise. I have no notion of any landlord suffering his tenant to be ruined before his face without lifting a finger to prevent it."

"Oh! fie, Bryan, you are now losing your temper. I shall say no more to you. Still I can make allowances. However, go home, and keep your mind easy, we shall take care of you, notwithsfanding your ill humor. Stay—you pass Mr. Clinton's—will you be good enough to call and tell Harry Clinton I wish to speak to him, and I will feel obliged?"

"Certainly, sir," replied Bryan, "with pleasure. I wish you good morning."

"Could it be possible," he added, "that the hint Hycy Burke threw out about young Clinton has any truth in it—'Harry Clinton will do you an injury;' but more he would not say. I will now watch him well, for I certainly cannot drame why he should be my enemy."

He met Clinton on the way, however, to whom he delivered the message.

"I am much obliged to you," said he, "I was already aware of it; but now that I have met you, M'Mahon, allow me to ask if you have not entrusted a memorial to the care of Mr. Chevydale, in order that it might be sent up strongly supported by him to the Board of Excise?"

"I have," said Bryan, "and it has been sent, if I am to believe Mr. Fethertonge."

"Listen to me, my honest friend—don't believe Fethertonge, nor don't rely on Chevydale, who will do nothing more nor less than the agent allows him. If you depend upon either or both, you are a ruined man, and I am very much afraid you are that already. It has *not* been sent; but observe that I mention this in confidence, and with an understanding that, for the present, you will not name me in the matter."

"I sartinly will not," replied Bryan, who was forcibly struck with the truth and warmth of interest that were evident in his language and manner; "and here is a letter that I received this very mornin' from the Secretary of Excise, stating that no memorial on my behalf has been sent up to them at all."

"Ay, just so; that is the true state of the matter."

"What, in God's name, am I to do, then?" asked Bryan, in a state of great and evident perplexity.

"I shall tell you; go to an honest man—I don't say, observe, that Chevydale is *not* honest; but he is weak and negligent, and altogether the slave and dupe of his agent. Go to-morrow morning early, about eight o'clock, fetch another memorial, and wait upon Major Vanston; state your case to him plainly and simply, and, my life for yours, he will not neglect you, at all events. Get a fresh memorial drawn up this very day."

"I can easily do that," said Bryan, "for I have a rough copy of the one I sent; it was Hycy Burke drew it up."

"Hycy Burke," repeated Clinton, starting with surprise, "do you tell me so?"

"Sartinly," replied the other, "why do you ask?"

Clinton shook his head carelessly. "Well," he said, "I am glad of it; it is better late than never. Hycy Burke"—he paused and looked serious a moment,—"yes," he added, "I am glad of it. Go now and follow my advice, and you will have at least a chance of succeeding, and perhaps of defeating your enemies, that is, if you have any."

The pressure of time rendered energy and activity necessary in the case of Bryan; and, accordingly, about eight o'clock next morning, he was seeking permission to speak to

the man against whom he and his family had always conscientiously voted—because he had been opposed to the spirit and principles of their religion.

Major Vanston heard his case with patience, inquired more minutely into the circumstances, asked where Ahadarra was, the name of his landlord, and such other circumstance as were calculated to make the case clear.

"Pray, who drew up this memorial?" he asked.

"Mr. Hycy Burke, sir," replied Bryan.

"Ah, indeed," said he, glancing with a singular meaning at M'Mahon.

"You and Burke are intimate then?"

"Why, we are, sir," replied Bryan, "on very good terms."

"And now Mr. Burke has obliged you, I suppose, because you have obliged him?"

"Well, I don't know that he has obliged me much," said Bryan, "but I know that I have obliged him a good deal."

Vanston nodded and seemed satisfied.

"Very well," he proceeded; "but, with respect to this memorial. I can't promise you much. Leave it with me, however, and you shall probably hear from me again. I fear we are late in point of time; indeed, I have but faint hopes of it altogether, and I would not recommend you to form any strong expectations from the interference of any one; still, at the same time," he added, looking significantly at him, "I don't desire you to despair altogether."

"He has as much notion," thought Bryan, "of troubling his head about me or my memorial, as I have for standin' candidate for the county. D—n them all! they think of nobody but themselves!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

A Family Dialogue—Ahadarra not in for it—Bryan's Vote.

Honest Jemmy Burke, we have already said, had brought home his second son, Edward, from school, for the purpose of training him to agricultural pursuits, having now abandoned all notions of devoting him to the Church, as he would have done had Hycy manifested towards him even the ordinary proofs of affection and respect.

"You druv me to it, Rosha," said he to his wife; "but I'll let you both know that I'm able to be masther in my own house still. You have made your pet what he is; but I tell you that if God hasn't said it, you'll curse one another with bitther hearts yet."

"Well, sure you have your own way," replied his wife, "but you wor ever and always self-willed and headstrong. However, it's all the mane blood that's in you; it breaks your heart to see your son a gintleman; but in spite of your strong brogues and felt caubeen, a gentleman he is, and a gentleman he will be, an' that's all I have to say about it. You'll tache your pet to hate his brother, I'll go bail."

"No, indeed, Rosha," he replied, "I know my duty to God and my childre' betther than to turn them against one another; but it's only a proof of how little you know about Edward and his warm and lovin' heart, when you spake as you do."

This indeed was true. Edward Burke was but a short time at home when he saw clearly how matters stood in the family. He was in fact a youth of a most affectionate and generous disposition, and instead of attempting to make the breach wider, as Hycy had he been in his place would have done, he did everything in his power to put the parties into a good state of feeling with each other, and to preserve peace and harmony in the family.

One morning, a few days after Hycy's rejection by Miss Clinton, they were all at breakfast, "the accomplished" being in one of his musical and polite moods, his father bland but sarcastic, and Edward in a state of actual pain on witnessing the wilful disrespect or rather contempt that was implied by Hycy towards his parents.

"Well, Ned," said his father, "didn't we spend a pleasant evenin' in Gerald Cavanagh's last night? Isn't Kathleen a darlin'?"

"She is a delightful girl," replied Edward, "it can't be denied; indeed, I don't think I ever saw so beautiful a girl, and as for her figure, it is perfect—perfect."

"Ay," said the father, "and it's she that knows the difference between a decent sensible boy and a—gintleman—a highflyer. She was both kind and civil to *you*, Ned."

"I don't know as to the kindness," replied Edward; "but she was certainly civil and agreeable, and I don't think it's in her nature to be anything else."

"Except when she ought," said his father; "but listen, Ned—dress yourself up, get a buff waistcoat, a green jockey coat, a riding whip, and a pair o' shinin' top-boots, titivate yourself up like a dandy, then go to her wid lavendher water on your pocket-handkerchy, an' you'll see how she'll settle you. Be my sowl, you'll be the happy boy when you get her; don't *you* think so, Misther Hycy?"

"Unquestionably, Mr. Burke, when you speak you shame an Oracle; as for Master Ned—why—

"'I'm owre young, I'm owre young,
I'm owre young to marry yet,
I'm owre young, 'twould be a sin
To take me from my *Daddy* yet,'

I think, Master Edward, the Boy-god has already taken occupation; the *vituline* affection for the fair Katsey has set in; heigho, what a delightful period of life is that soft and lickful one of calf love, when the tongue rolls about the dripping lips, the whites of the eyes are turned towards the divine, the ox-eyed Katsey, and you are ready to stagger over and blare out the otherwise unutterable affection."

"Very well described, Hycy, I see you have not forgotten your Homer yet; but really Kathleen Cavanagh is a perfect Juno, and has the large, liquid, soft ox-eye in perfection."

"Let me look at you," said Hycy, turning round and staring at him with a good deal of surprise; "begad, brother Ned, let me ask where you got your connoisseurship upon women? eh? Oh, in the dictionary, I suppose, where the common people say everything is to be found. Observe me, Mr. Burke, you are taking your worthy son out of his proper vocation, the Church. Send him to 'Maynewth,' he is too good a connoisseur on beauty to be out of the Tribunal."

"Hycy," replied his brother, "these are sentiments that do you no credit; it is easy to sneer at religion or those who administer it,—much easier than to praise the one, it would appear, or imitate the virtues of the other."

"Beautiful rebuke," said Hycy, again staring at him; "why, Masther Edward, you are a prodigy of wonderful sense and unspotted virtue; love has made you eloquent—

"'I gaed a waefu' gate yestreen,
A gate, I fear, I'll dearly rue,
I gat my death frae twa sweet e'en,
Twa lovely e'en o' bonnie blue, &c., &c.'"

"I am not in love yet, Hycy, but as my father wishes to bring about a marriage between Kathleen and myself, you know," he added, smiling, "it will be my duty to fall in love with her as fast as I can."

"Dutiful youth! what a treasure you will prove to a dignified and gentlemanly parent,—to a fond and doting wife! Shall I however put forth my powers? Shall Hycy the accomplished interpose between Juno and the calf? What sayest thou, my most amiable maternal relative, and why sittest thou so silent and so sad?"

"Indeed, it's no wondher I would, Hycy," replied his mother, whom Edward's return had cast into complete dejection, "when I see your father strivin' to put between his own childre'."

"Me, Rosha!" exclaimed her husband; "God forgive you for that! but when I see that one of my childre' wont spake a word to me with respect or civility—no, not even in his natural voice, it is surely time for me to try if I can't find affection in his brother."

"Ay," said she, "that's your own way of it; but it's easy seen that your eggin' up Ned agin his brother, bringin' ill will and bad feelin' among a family that was quiet before; ay, an' I suppose you'd be glad to see my heart broke too, and indeed I didn't care it was," and as she spoke the words were accompanied by sobbings and tears.

"Alas!" said Hycy, still in the mock heroic—"where is the pride and dignity of woman? Remember, oh maternal relative, that you are the mother of one Gracchus at least! Scorn the hydraulics, I say; abandon the pathetic; cast sorrow to the winds, and —give me another cup of tea."

Edward shook his head at him, as if remonstrating against this most undutiful and contemptuous style of conversation to his mother. "Don't give way to tears, my dear mother," he said; "indeed you do my father injustice; he has neither said nor done anything to turn me against Hycy. Why should he? So far from that, I know that he loves Hycy at heart, all that he wishes is that Hycy would speak to him in his natural voice, and treat him with respect, and the feeling that surely is due to him. And so Hycy will, father; I am sure he respects and loves you in spite of this levity and affectation. All we want is for each to give up a little of his own way—when you become more respectful, Hycy, my father's manner will change too: let us be at least sincere and natural with each other, and there is nothing that I can see to prevent us from living very happily."

"I have some money saved," said Burke, turning to his wife—"a good penny—too, more than the world thinks; and I declare to my God I would give it twice over if I could hear that young man," pointing to Hycy, "speak these words with the same heart and feelings of him that spoke them; but I fear that 'ud be a hopeless wish on my part, an' ever will."

"No, father," said Edward, "it will not. Hycy and you will soon understand one another. Hycy will see what his duty towards you is, and, sooner than be the means of grieving your heart, he will change the foolish and thoughtless habit that offends you."

"Well, Edward, may God grant it," ex-

claimed his father rising up from breakfast, "and that's all I have to say—God grant it!"

"Why, Sir Oracle, junior," said Hycy, after his father had gone out, "or rather Solomon Secundus, if you are now an unfledged philosopher on our hand, what will you not be when your opinions are grown?"

"My dear brother," replied Edward, I cannot see what on earth you can propose to yourself by adopting this ridiculous style of conversation—I cannot really see any object you can have in it. If it be to vex or annoy my father, can you blame him if he feels both vexed and annoyed at it.

"Most sapiently said, Solomon Secundus—

"'Solomon Lob was a ploughman stout,
And a ranting cavalier;
And, when the civil war broke out,
It quickly did appear
That Solomon Lob was six feet high,
And fit for a grenadier.
So Solomon Lob march'd boldly forth
To sounds of bugle horns
And a weary march had Solomon Lob,
For Solomon Lob had corns.
Row,—ra—ra—row—de—dow.'

And so I wish you a good morning, most sapient Solomon. I go on business of importance affecting—the welfare of the nation, or rather of the empire at large—embracing all these regions, antipodial and otherwise, on which the sun never sets. Good morning, therefore; and, maternal relative, wishing the same to thee, with a less copious exhibition of the hydraulics, a-hem!"

"Where is he going, mother, do you know?" asked Edward.

"Indeed I don't know, Edward," she replied; "he seldom or never tells us anything about his motions; but it vexes me to think that his father won't make any allowance for his lightheartedness and fine spirits. Sure now, Edward, you know yourself it's not raisonable to have a young man like him mumpin' and mopin' about, as if there was a wake in the house?"

The only reply Edward made to this weak and foolish speech was, "Yes; but there is reason in everything, my dear mother. I have heard," he added, "that he is working for the Tory candidate, Vanston, and hope it is not true."

"Why," said his mother, "what differ does it make?"

"Why," replied the other, "that Vanston votes to keep us slaves, and Chevydale to give us our political freedom: the one is opposed to our religion and our liberty, and the other votes for both."

"Troth, as to religion," observed the mother, "the poor boy doesn't trouble his head much about it; but it's not aisy for one that goes into jinteel society to do so—an' that's what makes Hycy ait mate of a Friday as fast as on any other day."

"I am sorry to hear that, mother," replied Edward; "but Hycy is a very young man still, and will mend all these matters yet."

"And that's what I'm tellin' his father," she replied; "and if you'd only see the way he looks at me, and puts a *cuir** upon him so bitther that it would a'most take the skin off one."

Edward's observations with respect to Hycy's having taken a part in forwarding the interests of Major Vanston were not without foundation. He and Bryan M'Mahon had of late been upon very good terms; and it so happened that in the course of one of their conversations about Kathleen Cavanagh, Bryan had mentioned to him the fact of Kathleen's having heard that he was pledged to vote with Vanston, and repeated the determination to which she had resolved to come if he should do so. Now, it so happened, that a portion of this was already well known to Hycy himself, who, in fact, was the very individual who had assured Major Vanston, and those who canvassed for him, that he himself had secured Bryan. On hearing now from Bryan that Kathleen had put the issue of their affection upon his political truth and consistency he resolved to avail himself of that circumstance if he could. On hearing, besides, however, that Harry Clinton had actually sent him (M'Mahon) to Vanston, and on being told, in the course of conversation, that that gentleman asked who had drawn up the memorial, he felt that every circumstance was turning in his favor; for he determined now to saddle Clinton with the odium which, in this treacherous transaction, was most likely to fall upon himself.

It is not our intention here to describe the brutal and disgraceful scenes that occur at an election. It is enough to say that, after a long, bitter, and tedious struggle, the last day of it arrived. Bryan M'Mahon, having fully satisfied himself that his landlord had not taken a single step to promote his interests in the matter of the memorial, resolved from the beginning not to vote in his favor, and, of course, not to vote at all.

On the morning of the last day, with the exception of himself alone, a single voter had not been left unpolled; and the position of the two candidates was very peculiar, both having polled exactly the same number of votes, and both being consequently equal.

* *Cuir*, a grin—mostly of contempt.

Bryan, having left home early, was at breakfast about eleven o'clock, in a little recess off the bar of the head-inn, which was divided from one end of the coffee-room by a thin partition of boards, through which anything spoken in an ordinary tone of voice in that portion of the room could be distinctly heard. Our readers may judge of his surprise on hearing the following short but pithy dialogue of which he himself formed the subject matter. The speakers, with whom were assembled several of his landlord's committee, being no other than that worthy gentleman and his agent.

"What's to be done?" asked Chevydale; "here is what we call a dead heat. Can no one prevail on that obstinate scoundrel, the Ahadarra man—what do ye call him? M'Master—M'Manus—M'— eh?"

"M'Mahon," replied Fethertonge, "I fear not; but, at all events, we must try him again. Vote or not, however, we shall soon clear him out of Ahadarra—we shall punish his insolence for daring to withhold his vote; for, as sure as my name is Fethertonge, out he goes. The fine and distillation affair, however, will save us a good deal of trouble, and of course I am very glad you declined to have anything to do with the support of his petition. The fellow is nothing else than shuffler, as I told you. Vote or not, therefore, out of Ahadarra he goes; and, when he does, I have a good tenant to put in his place."

M'Mahon's blood boiled on hearing this language, and he inwardly swore that, let the consequences be what they might, a vote of his should never go to the support of such a man.

Again we return to Hycy Burke, who, when the day of the great struggle arrived, rode after breakfast on that same morning into Ballymacan, and inquired at the post-office if there were any letters for him.

"No," replied the postmaster; "but, if you see Bryan M'Mahon, tell him I have here one for him, from Major Vanston—it's his frank and his handwriting."

"I'm going directly to him," said Hycy, "and will bring it to him; so you had better hand it here."

The postmaster gave him the letter, and in a few minutes Hycy was on his way home with as much speed as his horse was capable of making.

"Nanny," said he, calling upon Nanny Peety, when he had put his horse in the stable and entered the parlor, "will you fetch me a candle and some warm water?"

"Yes, sir," said Nanny; "but you must wait till I boil some, for there's none hot."

"Be quick, then," said he, "for I'm in a devil of a hurry. Shut the door after you, I say. What is the reason that you never do so, often as I have spoken to you about it?"

"Becaise it's never done," she replied; "nobody ever bids me shut it but yourself, an' that's what makes me forget it."

"Well, I'll thank you," he said, "to pay more attention to what I say to you. I have reason to think you both intrusive and ungrateful, Nanny; and, mark, unless you show me somewhat more submission, madam, you shall pitch your camp elsewhere. It was I brought you here."

"Ax your own conscience why, Mr. Hycy."

"Begone now and get me the hot water," he said, with a frown of anger and vexation, heightened probably by the state of agitation into which the possession of Vanston's letter had already put him.

We shall not follow him through all the ingenious and dishonorable manœuvres by which he got the communication safely opened; it is enough to say that, in the course of a few minutes, he was enabled to peruse the contents of Vanston's communication, which were as follows:—

SIR,—I beg to enclose you a letter which I received yesterday from the Secretary to the Board of Excise, and to assure you that I feel much pleasure in congratulating you upon its contents, and the satisfactory result of your memorial.

"I am, sir, very sincerely yours,

"ROBERT VANSTON.

"To Mr. Bryan M'Mahon,
"Ahadarra."

(The enclosed.)

"SIR,—I have had the honor of reading your communication in favor of Bryan M'Mahon, of Ahadarra, and of submitting that and his own memorial to the Commissioners of Excise, who, after maturely weighing the circumstances, and taking into consideration the excellent character which memoralist has received at your hands, have been pleased to reduce the fine originally imposed upon him to the sum of fifty pounds. The Commissioners are satisfied that memorialist, having been in no way connected with the illicit distillation which was carried on upon his property, is not morally liable to pay the penalty; but, as they have not the power of wholly remitting it they have reduced it as far the law has given them authority.

"I have the honor to be, sir, your faithful and obedient servant,

"FRANCIS FATHOM.

"To Major Vanston, &c., &c."

Hycy, having perused these documents, re-sealed them in such a manner as to evade all suspicion of their having been opened.

"Now," thought he, "what is to be done? Upon the strength of this, it is possible I may succeed in working up M'Mahon to vote for Vanston; for I know into what an enthusiasm of gratitude the generous fool will be thrown by them. If he votes for Vanston, I gain several points. First and foremost, the round some of three hundred. If I can get his vote, I establish my own veracity, which, as matters stand, will secure Vanston the election; I, also, having already secretly assured the Tory gentleman that I *could* secure him, or rather, I can turn my lie into truth, and make Vanston my friend. Secondly, knowing as I do, that it was by Harry Clinton's advice the clod-hopper went to him, I can shift the odium of his voting for Vanston upon that youth's shoulders, whose body, by the way, does not contain a single bone that I like; and, thirdly, having by his apostacy and treachery, as it will be called, placed an insurmountable barrier between himself and the divine Katsey, I will change my course with Jemmy, the gentleman—my sarcastic dad—return and get reconciled with that whelp of a brother of mine, and by becoming a good Christian, and a better Catholic, I have no doubt but I shall secure the 'Ox-eyed,' as I very happily named her the other morning. This, I think, will be making the most of the cards, and, as the moment is critical, I shall seek the clod-hopper and place this seasonable communication in his hands."

He accordingly rode rapidly into town again, where he had not been many minutes when he met M'Mahon, burning with indignation at the language of his landlord and the agent.

"I cannot have patience, Hycy," he exclaimed, "under such scoundrelly language as this; and while I have breath in my body, he never shall have my vote!"

"What's the matter, Bryan?" he asked; "you seem flushed."

"I do, Hycy, because I am flushed, and not without reason. I tell you that my landlord, Chevydale, is a scoundrel, and Fethertonge a deceitful villain."

"Pooh, man, is that by way of information? I thought you had something in the shape of novelty to tell me. What has happened, however, and why are you in such a white heat of indignation?"

M'Mahon immediately detailed the conversation which he had overheard behind the bar of the inn, and we need scarcely assure our readers that Hycy did not omit the opportunity of throwing oil upon the fire which blazed so strongly.

"Bryan," said he, "I know the agent to be a scoundrel, and what is nearer the case still, I have every reason—but you must not ask me to state them yet,—I have every reason to suspect that it is Fethertonge, countenanced by Chevydale, who is at the bottom of the distillation affair that has ruined you. The fact is, they are anxious to get you out of Ahadarra, and thought that by secretly ruining you, they could most plausibly effect it."

"I have now no earthly doubt of it, Hycy," replied the other.

"You need not," replied Hycy; "and maybe I'm not far astray when I say, that the hook-nosed old Still-hound, Clinton, is not a thousand miles from the plot. I could name others connected with some of them—but I wont, *now*."

When M'Mahon recollected the conversation which both Clinton and the agent had held with him, with respect to violating the law, the truth of Hycy's remark flashed upon him at once, and of course deepened his indignation almost beyond endurance.

"They are two d—d scoundrels," pursued Hycy, "and I have reasons, besides, for suspecting that it was their wish, if they could have done it successfully, to have directed your suspicions against myself."

M'Mahon was, in fact, already convinced of this, and felt satisfied that he saw through and understood the whole design against him, and was perfectly aware of those who had brought him to ruin.

"By the way," said Hycy, "let me not forget that I have been looking for you this hour or two; here is a letter I got for you in the post-office this morning. It has Vanston's frank, and I think is in his handwriting."

M'Mahon's face, on perusing the letter, beamed with animation and delight. "Here, Hycy," said he, "read that; I'm safe yet, thank God, and *not* a ruined man, as the villains thought to make me."

"By my soul and honor, Bryan," exclaimed the other, "that is noble on the part of Vanston, especially towards an individual from whom, as well as from his whole family, he has ever experienced the strongest opposition. However, if I were in your coat, I certainly would not suffer him to outdo me in generosity. Good heavens! only contrast such conduct with that of the other scoundrel, his opponent, and then see the conclusion you must come to."

"Let Vanston be what he may, he's an honest man," replied Bryan, "and in less than ten minutes I'll have him the sittin' member. I would be ungrateful and ungenerous, as you say, Hycy, not to do so.

Come along—come along, I bid you. I don't care what they say. The man that saved me—who was his enemy—from ruin, will have my vote."

They accordingly proceeded towards the court house, and on their way Hycy addressed him as follows:—"Now, Bryan, in order to give your conduct an appearance of greater generosity, I will pretend to dissuade you against voting for Vanston, or, rather, I will endeavor, as it were, to get your vote for Chevydale. This will make the act more manly and determined on your part, and consequently one much more high-minded and creditable to your reputation. You will show them, besides, that you are not the cowardly slave of your landlord."

It was accordingly so managed; the enthusiastic gratitude of the young man overcame all considerations; and in a few minutes Major Vanston was declared by the sheriff duly elected, by a majority of one vote only.

It is no part of our intention to describe the fierce sensation which this victory created among the greater portion of the people. The tumult occasioned by their indignation and fury was outrageous and ruffianly as usual; but as the election had now terminated, it soon ceased, and the mobs began to disperse to their respective homes. Bryan for some three hours or so was under the protection of the military, otherwise he would have been literally torn limb from limb. In the mean time we must follow Hycy.

This worthy and straightforward young gentleman, having now accomplished his purpose, and been the means of M'Mahon having exposed himself to popular vengeance, took the first opportunity of withdrawing from him secretly, and seeking Vanston's agent. Having found him, and retired out of hearing, he simply said—

"I will trouble you for three hundred."

"You shall have it," replied that honest gentleman; "you shall have it. We fully acknowledge the value of your services in this matter; it is to them we owe our return."

"There is no doubt in the matter," replied Hycy; "but you know not my difficulty, nor the dexterous card I had to play in accomplishing my point."

"We are sensible of it all," replied the other; "here," said he, pulling out his pocket-book, "are three notes for one hundred each."

"Give me two fifties," said Hycy, "instead of this third note, and you will oblige me. By the way, here is the major." With this the other immediately complied, without the major having been in any way cognizant of the transaction.

On entering the inner room where they stood, Vanston shook hands most cordially with Hycy, and thanked him in very warm language for the part he took, to which he had no hesitation in saying he owed his return.

"Look upon me henceforth as a friend, Mr. Burke," he added, "and a sincere one, who will not forget the value of your influence with the young man whose vote has gained me the election. I have already served him essentially,—in fact saved him from ruin, and I am very glad of it."

"I really feel very much gratified, Major Vanston, that I have had it in my power," replied Hycy, "to render you any service of importance; and if I ever *should* stand in need of a favor at your hands, I shall not hesitate to ask it."

"Nor I to grant it, Mr. Burke, if it be within the reach of my influence."

"In the mean time," said Hycy, "will you oblige me with a single franc?"

"Certainly, Mr. Burke; with half a dozen of them."

"Thank you, sir, one will be quite sufficient; I require no more."

The major, however, gave him half a dozen of them, and after some further chat, and many expressions of obligation on the part of the new M. P., Hycy withdrew.

CHAPTER XIX.

Bryan Bribed—is Rejected by Kathleen.

In the course of about two or three hours after the transaction already stated, old Peety Dhu was proceeding towards the post-office with a letter, partly in his closed hand, and partly up the inside of his sleeve, so as that it might escape observation. The crowds were still tumultuous, but less so than in the early part of the day; for, as we said, they were diminishing in numbers, those who had been so long from home feeling a natural wish to return to their families and the various occupations and duties of life which they had during this protracted contest been forced to neglect. Peety had got as far as the market-house—which was about the centre of the street—on his way, we say, to the post-office, when he met his daughter Nanny, who, after a few words of inquiry, asked him where he was going.

"Faith, an' that's more than I dare tell you," he replied.

"Why," she said, "is there a saicret in it? I'm sure you needn't keep it from me, whatever it is."

This she added in a serious and offended tone, which, however, was not lost on the old man.

"Well," said he, "considherin' the man he is, an' what you know about him, I think I may as well tell you. It's a letther I'm bringin' to slip into the post-office, unknownst."

"Is it from Hycy?" she asked.

"From Hycy, and no other."

"I'll hould a wager," she replied, "that that's the very letther I seen him openin' through the key hole doar this mornin'. Do you know who it's to?" she inquired.

"Oh, the sorra know; he said it was a love-letther, and that he did not wish to be seen puttin' it in himself."

"Wait," said she, "give it to me here for a minute; here's Father M'Gowan comin' up, and I'll ax him who it's directed to."

She accordingly took the letter out of his hand, and approaching the priest, asked him the name of the person to whom it was addressed.

"Plaise your reverence," she said, "what name's on the back of this?—I mane," said she, "who is goin' to?"

The priest looked at it, and at once replied, "It is goin' to Bryan M'Mahon, of Ahadarra, the traitor, and it comes from Major Vanston, the enemy to his liberty and religion, that his infamous vote put into Parliament, to rivet our chains, and continue our degradation. So there, girl, you have now the bigot from whom it comes, and the apostate to whom it goes. Who gave it to you?"

Nanny, who from some motives of her own, felt reluctant to mention Hycy's name in the matter, hastily replied, "A person, plaise your reverence, from Major Vanston."

"Very well, girl, discharge your duty," said the priest; "but I tell you the devil will never sleep well till he has his clutches in the same Major, as well as in the shameless apostate he has corrupted."

Having uttered these words, he passed on, and Nanny in a minute or two afterwards returned the letter to her father, who with his own hands put it into the post-office.

"Now," said she to her father, "the people is scatterin' themselves homewards; and the streets is gettin' clear—but listen—that letter is directed to Bryan M'Mahon; will you keep about the post-office here; Bryan's in town, an' it's likely when the danger's over that he may be passin'. Now you know that if he does, the people in the shop where the post-office is kep' will see him, an' maybe he'll get the letter to-day, or I'll tell you what, watch Hycy; take my word for it, he has some scheme afoot."

"Hycy's no favorite wid you, Nanny."

"Why you know he's not, an' indeed I don't know why he's one wid you."

"Throth an' he is, many a shillin' an' sixpence he throws me,—always does indeed wherever he meets me."

"No matter, maybe the day will soon come when you'll change your opinion of him, that's all I say, except to keep your eye on him; and I'll tell you why I bid you, some day soon."

"Well, achora, maybe I may change my opinion of him; but at present I say he is my favorite, an' will be so, till I know worse about him."

Nanny, having bade him good-bye, and repeated her wish that the old man would watch the post-office for some time, proceeded up the street in the direction of the grocer's, to whom she had been dispatched for groceries.

Two hours more had now elapsed, the crowds were nearly dispersed, and the evening was beginning to set in, when Hycy Burke called at the post-office, and for the second time during the day, asked if there was a letter for him.

The post-master searched again, and replied, "No; but here's another for Bryan M'Mahon."

"What!" he exclaimed, "another for Bryan! Why he must have an extensive correspondence, this Bryan M'Mahon. I wonder who it's from."

"There's no wonder at all about it," replied the post-master, "it's from Major Vanston. Here's his frank and handwriting in the direction and all."

"Allow me to look," said Hycy, glancing at it. "Yes, you are quite right, that is the gallant Major's hand, without any mistake whatsoever. I will not fetch him this letter," he proceeded, "because I know not when I may see him; but if I see him, I shall tell him."

Peety Dhu, who had so placed himself in the shop attached to the post-office, on seeing Hycy approach, that he might overhear this conversation without being seen, felt considerably surprised that Hycy should seem to have been ignorant that there was a letter for M'Mahon, seeing that it was he himself who had sent it there. He consequently began to feel that there was some mystery in the matter; but whatever it might be, he knew that it was beyond his power to develope.

On coming forward from the dark part of the shop, where he had been standing, he asked the post-master if there was a second letter for M'Mahon.

"No," replied the man, "there is only one. If you see him, tell him there's

ter from Major Vanston in the office for him."

We must still trace Hycy's motions. On leaving the post-office, he went directly to the Head Inn, where he knew Bryan M'Mahon was waiting until the town should become perfectly calm and quiet. Here he found Bryan, whose mind was swayed now to one side and now to another, on considering the principle on which he had voted, and the consequences to which that act might expose him.

"I know I will have much to endure," he thought, while pacing the room by himself in every way, "but I little value anything the world at large may think or say, so that I don't lose the love and good opinion of Kathleen Cavanagh."

"Why, Bryan," said Hycy, as he entered, "I think you must provide a secretary some of these days, your correspondence is increasing so rapidly."

"How is that?" inquired the other.

"Simply that there's another letter in the post-office for you, and if I don't mistake, from the same hand—that of our friend the Major."

"I'm not aware of anything he could have to write to me about now," replied Bryan; "I wonder what can it be?"

"If you wish I shall fetch you the letter," said Hycy, "as you have an objection I suppose to go out until the town is empty."

"Thank you, Hycy, I'll feel obliged to you if you do; and Hycy, by the way, I am sorry that you and I ever mistook or misunderstood one another; but sich things happen to the best of friends, and why should we hope to escape?"

"Speak only for yourself, Bryan," replied Hycy, "the misunderstanding was altogether on your side, not on mine. I always knew your value and esteemed you accordingly. I shall fetch your letter immediately."

On returning he placed the document aforesaid in M'Mahon's hands, and said, in imitation of his friend Teddy Phats—"Come now, read her up." Bryan opened the letter, and in the act of doing so a fifty pound note presented itself, of which, as it had been cut in two, one half fell to the ground.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Hycy, suddenly taking it up, "this looks well—what have we here? A fifty pound note!"

"Yes," replied Bryan; "but why cut in two? here however is something written, too—let me see—

"'Accept this as an earnest of better things for important services. The fine imposed upon you has been reduced to fifty pounds—this will pay it.

"A DEEPLY OBLIGED FRIEND.'"

The two young men looked at each other for some time without speaking. At length M'Mahon's face became crimsoned with indignation.

"Who could have dared to do this?" said he, once more looking at the bank-note and the few lines that accompanied it. "Who durst suppose that a M'Mahon would sell his vote for a bribe? Did Vanston suppose that money would sway me? for this I am sure must be *his* work."

"Don't be too sure of that," replied Hycy; "don't be too sure that it's not some one that wishes you worse than Vanston does. In my opinion, Bryan, that letter and the note contained in it were sent to you by some one who wishes to have it whispered abroad that you were bribed. It surely could not be Vanston's interest to injure your character or your circumstances in any sense; and I certainly think him too honorable to deal in an anonymous bribe of that kind."

"Some scoundrel has done it, that's clear; but what would you have me to do, Hycy? You are up to life and know the world a great deal better than I do; how ought I to act now?"

"I'll tell you candidly, my dear Bryan, how I think you ought to act, or at least how I would act myself if I were in your place." He then paused for a minute and proceeded:—"You know I may be wrong, Bryan, but I shall advise you at all events honestly, and to the best of my ability. I would keep this letter and this note, and by the way, what else can you do?—I would say nothing whatsoever about it. The secret, you know, rests with yourself and me, with the exception of the party that sent it. Now, mark me, I say—if the party that sent this be a friend, there will be no more about it—it will drop into the grave; but if it came from an enemy the cry of bribery will be whispered about, and there will be an attack made on your character. In this case you can be at no loss as to the source from whence the communication came—Fethertonge will then most assuredly be the man; or, harkee, who knows but the whole thing is an electioneering trick resorted to for the purpose of impugning your vote, and of getting Vanston out on petition and scrutiny. Faith and honor, Bryan, I think that this last is the true reading."

"I'm inclined to agree with you there," replied Bryan, "that looks like the truth; and even then I agree with you still that Fethertonge is at the bottom of it. Still how am I to act?"

"In either case, Bryan, precisely as I said. Keep the letter and the bank-note;

say nothing about it—that is clearly your safest plan; do not let them out of your hands, for the time may come when it will be necessary to your own character to show them."

"Well, then, I will be guided by you, Hycy. As you say no one knows the secret but yourself and me; if it has come from a friend he will say nothing about it, but if it has come from an enemy it *will* be whispered about; but at all events I have you as proof that it did not come to me by any bargain of mine."

Hycy spoke not a word, but clapped him approvingly on the shoulder, as much as to say—"Exactly so, that is precisely the fact," and thus ended the dialogue.

We all know that the clearer the mirror the slighter will be the breath necessary to stain it; on the breast of an unsullied shirt the most minute speck will be offensively visible. So it is with human character and integrity. Had Bryan M'Mahon belonged to a family of mere ordinary reputation—to a family who had generally participated in all the good and evil of life, as they act upon and shape the great mass of society, his vote might certainly have created much annoyance to his party for a very brief period—just as other votes given from the usual motives—sometimes right and honorable—sometimes wrong and corrupt—usually do. In his case, however, there was something calculated to startle and alarm all those who knew and were capable of appreciating the stainless honor and hereditary integrity of the family. The M'Mahon's, though inoffensive and liberal in their intercourse with the world, even upon matters of a polemical nature, were nevertheless deeply and devotedly attached to their own religion, and to all those who in any way labored or contributed to relieve it of its disabilities, and restore those who professed it to that civil liberty which had been so long denied them. This indeed was very natural on the part of the M'Mahons, who would sooner have thought of taking to the highway, or burning their neighbor's premises, than supporting the interests or strengthening the hands of any public man placed in a position to use a hostile influence against them. There was only one other family in the barony, who in all that the M'Mahon's felt respecting their religion and civil liberty, were far in advance of them. These were the Cavanaghs, between whom and the M'Mahons their existed so many strong points of resemblance that they only differed from the others in degree—especially on matters connected with religion and its privileges. In these matters the Cavanaghs were firm, stern, and inflexible—nay, so heroic was the enthusiasm and so immovable the attachment of this whole family to their creed, that we have no hesitation whatever in saying that they would have laid down their lives in its defence, or for its promotion, had such a sacrifice been demanded from them. On such a family, then, it is scarcely necessary to describe the effects of what was termed Bryan M'Mahon's apostacy. The intelligence came upon them in fact like a calamity. On the very evening before, Gerald Cavanagh, now a fierce advocate for Edward Burke, having, in compliance with old Jemmy, altogether abandoned Hycy, had been urging upon Kathleen the prudence and propriety of giving Bryan M'Mahon up, and receiving the address of young Burke, who was to inherit the bulk of his father's wealth and property; and among other arguments against M'Mahon he stated a whisper then gaining ground, that it was *his intention* to vote for Vanston.

"But I know to the contrary, father," said Kathleen, "for I spoke to him on that very subject, and Bryan M'Mahon is neither treacherous nor cowardly, an' won't of course abandon his religion or betray it into the hands of its enemies. Once for all, then," she added, calmly, and with a smile full of affection and good humor, "I say you may spare both yourself and me a great deal of trouble, my dear father, I grant you that I like and esteem Edward Burke as a friend, an' I think that he really is what his brother Hycy wishes himself to be thought—a true gentleman—but that is all, father, you know; for I would scorn to conceal it, that Bryan M'Mahon has my affections, and until he proves false to his God, his religion, and his country, I will never prove false to him nor withdraw my affections from him."

"For all that," replied her father, "it's strongly suspected that he's goin' over to the tories, an' will vote for Vanston to-morrow."

Kathleen rose with a glowing cheek, and an eye sparkling with an enthusiastic trust in her lover's faith; "No, father," said she. "by the light of heaven above us, he will never vote for Vanston—unless Vanston becomes the friend of our religion. I have only one worthless life, but if I had a thousand, and that every one of them was worth a queen's, I'd stake them all on Bryan M'Mahon's truth. If he ever turns traitor—let me die before I hear it, I pray God this night!"

As she spoke, the tears of pride, trust, and the noble attachment by which she was moved, ran down her cheeks; in fact, the natural dignity and high moral force of her character awed them, and her father completely subdued, simply replied—

"Very well, Kathleen; I'll say no more, dear; I won't press the matter on you again, and so I'll tell Jemmy Burke."

Kathleen, after wiping away her tears, thanked him, and said with a smile, and in spite of the most boundless confidence in the integrity of her lover, "never, at any rate, father, until Bryan M'Mahon turns a traitor to his religion and his country."

On the evening of the next day, or rather late at night, her father returned from the scene of contest, but very fortunately for Kathleen's peace of mind during that night, he found on inquiry that she and Hanna had been for a considerable time in bed. The following morning Hanna, who always took an active share in the duties of the family, and who would scarcely permit her sister to do anything, had been up a short time before her, and heard from her mother's lips the history of Bryan's treachery, as it was now termed by all. We need scarcely say that she was deeply affected, and wept bitterly. Kathleen, who rose a few minutes afterwards, thought she saw her sister endeavoring to conceal her face, but the idea passed away without leaving anything like a fixed impression upon it. Hanna, who was engaged in various parts of the house, contrived still to keep her face from the observation of her sister, until at length the latter was ultimately struck by the circumstance as well as by Hanna's unusual silence. Just as her father had entered to breakfast, a sob reached her ears, and on going over to inquire if anything were wrong, Hanna, who was now fairly overcome, and could conceal her distress no longer, ran over, and throwing herself on Kathleen's neck, she exclaimed in a violent burst of grief, "Kathleen, my darling sister, what will become of you! It's all true. Bryan has proved false and a traitor; he voted for Vanston yesterday, and that vote has put the bitter enemy of our faith into Parliament."

"Bryan M'Mahon a traitor!" exclaimed Kathleen; "no, Hanna—no, I say—a thousand times no. It could not be—the thing is impossible—impossible!"

"It is as true as God's in heaven, that he voted yesterday for Vanston," said her father; "I both seen him and heard him, an' that vote it was that gained Vanston the election."

Hanna, whose arms were still around her sister's neck, felt her stagger beneath her on hearing those words from her father.

"You say you saw him, father, and h'ard him vote for Vanston. You say you did?"

"I both seen the traitor an' h'ard him," replied the old man.

"Hanna, dear, let me sit down," said Kathleen, and Hanna, encircling her with one hand, drew a chair over with the other, on which, with a cheek pale as death, her sister sat, whilst Hanna still wept with her arms about her. After a long silence, she at last simply said:—

"I must bear it; but in this world my happiness is gone."

"Don't take it so much to heart avourneen," said her mother; "but, any way, hadn't you betther see himself, an' hear what he has to say for himself. Maybe, afther all, it's not so bad as it looks. See him, Kathleen; maybe there's not so much harm in it yet."

"No, mother, see him I will not, in *that* sense—Bryan M'Mahon a traitor! Am I a dreamer? I am not asleep, and Bryan M'Mahon is false to God and his country! I did think that he would give his life for both, if he was called upon to do so; but not that he would prove false to them as he has done."

"He has, indeed," said her father, "and the very person you hate so much, bad as you think him, did all in his power to prevent him from doin' the black deed. I seen that, too, and h'ard it. Hycy persuaded him as much as he could against it; but he wouldn't listen to him, nor pay him any attention."

"Kathleen," said her sister, "the angels in heaven fell, and surely it isn't wonderful that even a good man should be tempted and fall from the truth as they did?"

Kathleen seemed too much abstracted by her distress to hear this. She looked around at them all, one after another, and said in a low, composed, and solemn voice, "All is over now between that young man and me—and here is one request which I earnestly entreat you—every one of you—to comply with."

"What is it darling?" said her mother.

"It is," she replied, "never in my hearing to mention his name while I live. As for myself, I will never name him!"

"And think, after all," observed her father, "of poor Hycy bein' true to his religion!"

It would seem that her heart was struggling to fling the image of M'Mahon from it, but without effect. It was likely she tried to hate him for his apostacy, but she could not. Still, her spirit was darkened with scorn and indignation at the act of dishonor which she felt her lover had committed, just as the atmosphere is by a tempest. In fact, she detested what she considered the baseness and treachery of the vote; but could not of a sudden change a love so strong, so trusting, and so pure as hers, into the pas-

sions of enmity and hatred. No sooner, however, had her father named Hycy Burke with such approval, than the storm within her directed itself against him, and she said, "For God's sake, father, name not that unprincipled wretch to me any more. I hate and detest him more than any man living. *He* has *no* good quality to redeem him. Ah! Hanna, Hanna, and is it come to this? The dream of my happiness has vanished, and I awake to nothing now but affliction and sorrow. As for happiness, I must think of that no more. Father, after breakfast, do you go up to that young man and tell him the resolution I have come to, and that it is over for ever between him and me."

Soon after this, she once more exacted a promise from them to observe a strict silence on the unhappy event which had occurred, and by no means ever to attempt offering her consolation. These promises they religiously kept, and from this forth neither M'Mahon's name nor his offence were made the topics of any conversation that occurred between them.

CHAPTER XX.

M'Mahon is Denounced from the Altar—Receives his Sentence from Kathleen, and Resolves to Emigrate.

Whatever difficulty Bryan M'Mahon had among his family in defending the course he had taken at the election, he found that not a soul belonging to his own party would listen to any defense from him. The indignation, obloquy, and spirit of revenge with which he was pursued and harassed, excited in his heart, as they would in that of any generous man conscious of his own integrity, a principle of contempt and defiance, which, however they required independence in him, only made matters far worse than they otherwise would have been. He expressed neither regret nor repentance for having voted as he did; but on the contrary asserted with a good deal of warmth, that if the same course lay open to him he would again pursue it.

"I will never vote for a scoundrel," said he, "and I don't think that there is anything in my religion that makes it a duty on me to do so. If my religion is to be supported by scoundrels, the sooner it is forced to depend on itself the better. Major Vanston is a good landlord, and supports the rights of his tenantry, Catholic as well as Protestant; he saved me from ruin when my own landlord refused to interfere for me, an' Major Vanston, if he's conscientiously opposed to my religion, is an honest man at all events, and an honest man I'll ever support against a rogue, and let their politics go where they generally do, "go to the devil."

Party is a blind, selfish, infatuated monster, brutal and vehement, that knows not what is meant by reason, justice, liberty, or truth. M'Mahon, merely because he gave utterance with proper spirit to sentiments of plain common sense, was assailed by every description of abuse, until he knew not where to take refuge from that cowardly and ferocious tyranny which in a hundred shapes proceeded from the public mob. On the Sunday after the election, his parish priest, one of those political fire-brands, who, whether under a mitre or a white band, are equally disgraceful and detrimental to religion and the peaceful interests of mankind —this man, we say, openly denounced him from the altar, in language which must have argued but little reverence for the sacred place from which it was uttered, and which came with a very bad grace from one who affected to be an advocate for liberty of conscience and a minister of peace.

"Ay," he proceeded, standing on the altar, "it is well known to our disgrace and shame how the election was lost. Oh, well may I say to our disgrace and shame. Little did I think that any one, bearing the once respectable name of M'Mahon upon him, should turn from the interests of his holy church, spurn all truth, violate all principle, and enter into a league of hell with the devil and the enemies of his church. Yes, you apostate," he proceeded, "you have entered into a league with him, and ever since there is devil within you. You sold yourself to his agent and representative, Vanston, You got him to interfere for you with the Board of Excise, and the fine that was justly imposed on you for your smugglin' and distillin' whiskey—not that I'm runnin' down our whiskey, because it's the best drinkin' of that kind we have, and drinks beautiful as *scathleen*, wid a bit of butther and sugar in it—but it's notorious that you went to Vanston, and offered if he'd get the fine off you, that you'd give him your vote; an' if that's not sellin' yourself to the devil, I don't know what is. Judas did the same thing when he betrayed our Savior—the only difference is—that he got a thirty shilling note—an' God knows it was a beggarly bargain—when his hand was in he ought to have done the thing dacent—and you got the fine taken off you; that's the difference—that's the difference. But there's more to come—more corruption where that was. Along wid the removal of the fine you got a better note than Mr. Judas got. Do you happen to know anything about a fifty pound note cut in two halves?

Eh? Am I tickling you? Do you happen to know anything about that, you traicherous apostate? If you don't, I do; and plaise God before many hours the public will know enough of it, too. How dare you, then, pollute the house of God, or come in presence of His Holy altar, wid such a crust of crimes upon your soul? Can you deny that you entered into a league of hell wid the devil and Major Vanston, and that you promised him your vote if he'd get the fine removed?"

"I can," replied Bryan; "there's not one word of truth in it."

"Do you hear that, my friends?" exclaimed the priest; "he calls your priest a liar upon the altar of the livin' God."

Here M'Mahon was assailed by such a storm of groans and hisses as, to say the least of it, was considerably at variance with the principles of religion and the worship of God.

"Do you deny," the priest proceeded, "that you received a bribe of fifty pounds on the very day you voted? Answer me that."

"I did receive a fifty-pound note in a—"

Further he could not proceed. It was in vain that he attempted to give a true account of the letter and its enclosure; the enmity was not confined to either groans or hisses. He was seized upon in the very chapel, dragged about in all directions, kicked, punched, and beaten, until the apprehension of having a murder committed in presence of God's altar caused the priest to interfere. M'Mahon, however, was ejected from the chapel; but in such a state that, for some minutes, it could scarcely be ascertained whether he was alive or dead. After he had somewhat recovered, his friends assisted him home, where he lay confined to a sick bed for better than a week.

Such is a tolerably exact description of scenes which have too frequently taken place in the country, to the disgrace of religion and the dishonor of God. We are bound to say, however, that none among the priesthood encourage or take a part in them, unless those low and bigoted firebrands who are alike remarkable for vulgarity and ignorance, and who are perpetually inflamed by that meddling spirit which tempts them from the quiet path of duty into scenes of political strife and enmity, in which they seem to be peculiarly at home. Such scenes are repulsive to the educated priest, and to all who, from superior minds and information, are perfectly aware that no earthly or other good, but, on the contrary, much bitterness, strife, and evil, ever result from them.

Gerald Cavanagh was by no means so deeply affected by M'Mahon's vote as were his two daughters. He looked upon the circumstance as one calculated to promote the views which he entertained for Kathleen's happiness. Ever since the notion of her marriage with Hycy Burke or his brother—it mattered little to him which—he felt exceedingly dissatisfied with her attachment to M'Mahon. Of this weakness, which we may say, was the only one of the family, we have already spoken. He lost little time, however, in going to communicate his daughter's determination to that young man. It so happened, however, that, notwithstanding three several journeys made for the purpose, he could not see him; the fact being that Bryan always happened to be from home when he went. Then came the denouncing scene which we have just described, when his illness put it out of his power, without danger to himself, to undergo anything calculated to discompose or disturb him. The popular feeling, however, was fearfully high and indignant against him. The report went that he had called Father M'Pepper, the senior curate, a liar upon the very altar; and the commencement of his explanation with respect to the fifty-pound note, was, not unnaturally—since they would not permit him to speak—construed into an open admission of his having been bribed.

This was severe and trying enough, but it was not all. Chevydale, whom he unseated by his vote, after having incurred several thousand pounds of expense, was resolved to make him suffer for the loss of his seat, as well as for having dared to vote against him—a purpose in which he was strongly supported, or into which, we should rather say, he was urged by Fethertonge, who, in point of fact, now that the leases had dropped, was negotiating a beneficial bargain with the gauger, apart from Chevydale's knowledge, who was a feeble, weak-minded man, without experience or a proper knowledge of his duties. In fact, he was one of those persons who, having no fixed character of their own, are either good or evil, according to the principles of those by whom they happen for the time to be managed. If Chevydale had been under the guidance of a sensible and humane agent, he would have been a good landlord; but the fact being otherwise, he was, in Fethertonge's hands, anything but what a landlord ought to be. Be this as it may, the period of M'Mahon's illness passed away, and, on rising from his sick bed, he found the charge of bribery one of universal belief, against which scarcely any person had the courage to raise a voice. Even Hycy suffered himself, as it were, with great regret and reluctance, to become at length persuaded of its truth. Kathleen, on hearing that he him-

self had been forced to admit it in the chapel, felt that the gloom which had of late wrapped her in its shadow now became so black and impervious that she could see nothing distinctly. The two facts—that is to say, the vote and the bribery—seemed to her like some frightful hallucination which lay upon her spirits—some formidable illusion that haunted her night and day, and filled her whole being with desolation and sorrow.

With respect to his own feelings, there was but one thought which gave him concern, and this was an apprehension that Kathleen might be carried away by the general prejudice which existed against him.

"I know Kathleen, however," he would say; "I know her truth, her good sense, and her affection; and, whatever the world may say, she won't follow its example and condemn me without a hearing. I will see her to-morrow and explain all to her. Father," he added, "will you ask Dora if she will walk with me to the Long-shot Meadow? I think a stroll round it will do me good. I haven't altogether recovered my strength yet."

"To be sure I will go with you, Bryan," said the bright-eyed and affectionate sister; "to be sure I will; it's on my way to Gerald Cavanagh's; and I'm going down to see how they are, and to know if something I heard about them is thrue. I want to satisfy myself; but they musn't get on their high horse with me, I can tell them."

"*You* never doubted me, Dora," said Bryan, as they went along—"you never supposed for a moment that I could"—he paused. "I know," he added, "that it doesn't look well; but you never supposed that I acted from treachery, or deceit, or want of affection or respect for my religion? You don't suppose that what all the country is ringin' with—that I took a bribe or made a bargain with Vanston—is true?"

"Why do you ask *me* such questions?" she replied. "You acted on the spur of the minute; and I say, afther what you heard from the landlord and agent, if you had voted for him you'd be a mane, pitiful hound, unworthy of your name and family. You did well to put him out. If I had been in your place, 'out you go,' I'd say, 'you're not the man for my money.' Don't let what the world says fret you, Bryan; sure, while you have Kathleen and me at your back, you needn't care about them. At any rate, it's well for Father M'Pepper that I'm not a man, or, priest as he is, I'd make a stout horsewhip tache him to mind his religion, and not intermeddle in politics where he has no business."

"Why, you're a great little soldier, Dora," replied Bryan, smiling on her with affectionate admiration.

"I hate anything tyrannical or overbearing," she replied, "as I do anything that's mane and ungenerous."

"As to Father M'Pepper, we're not to take him as an example of what his brother priests in general are or ought to be. The man may think he is doing only his duty; but, at all events, Dora, he has proved to me, very much at my own cost, I grant, that he has more zeal than discretion! May God forgive him; and that's the worst I wish him. When did you see or hear from Kathleen? I long to give her an explanation of my conduct, because I know she will listen to raison."

"That's more than I know yet, then," replied Dora. "She has awful high notions of our religion, an' thinks we ought to go about huntin' after martyrdom. Yes, faix, she thinks we ought to lay down our lives for our religion or our counthry, if we were to be called on to do so. Isn't that nice doctrine? She's always reading books about them."

"It is, Dora, and thrue doctrine; and so we ought—that is, if our deaths would serve either the one or the other."

"And would you die for them, if it went to that? because if you would, I would; for then I'd know that I ought to do it."

"I don't know, Dora, whether I'd have strength or courage to do so, but I know one who would."

"I know too—Kathleen."

"Kathleen? you have said it. She would, I am certain, lay down her life for either her religion or the welfare of her country, if such a sacrifice could be necessary."

"Bryan, I have heard a thing about her, and I don't know whether I ought to tell it to you or not."

"I lave that to your own discretion, Dora; but you haven't heard, nor can you tell me anything, but what must be to her credit."

"I'll tell you, then; I heard it, but I won't believe it till I satisfy myself—that your family daren't name your name to her at home, and that everything is to be over between you. Now, I'm on my way there to know whether this is true or not; if it is, I'll think less of her than I ever did."

"And I won't Dora; but will think more highly of her still. She thinks I'm as bad as I'm reported to be."

"And that's just what she ought *not* to think. Why not see you and ask you the raison of it like a—ha! ha!—I was goin' to say like a man? Sure if she was as generous as she ought to be, she'd call upon you to explain yourself; or, at any rate, she'd defend you behind your back, and, when the world's against you, whether you wor right or wrong."

"She'd do nothing at the expense of truth," replied her brother.

"Truth!" exclaimed the lively and generous girl, now catching the warmth from her own enthusiasm, "truth! who'd regard truth—"

"Dora!" exclaimed Bryan, with a serio-comic smile.

"Ha! ha! ha!—truth! what was I sayin'? No, I didn't mean to say anything against truth; oh, no, God forgive me!" she added, immediately softening, whilst her bright and beautiful eyes filled with tears, "oh, no, nor against my darlin' Kathleen either; for, Bryan, I'm tould that she has never smiled since; and that the color that left her cheeks when she heard of your vote has never come back to it; and that, in short, her heart is broken. However, I'll soon see her, and maybe I won't plade your cause; no lawyer could match me. Whisht!" she exclaimed, "isn't that Gerald himself comin' over to us?"

"It is," replied Bryan, "let us meet him;" and, as he spoke, they turned their steps towards him. As they met, Bryan, forgetting everything that had occurred, and influenced solely by the habit of former friendship and good feeling, extended his hand with an intention of clasping that of his old acquaintance, but the latter withdrew, and refused to meet this usual exponent of good will.

"Well, Gerald," said M'Mahon, smiling, "I see you go with the world too; but, since you won't shake hands with me, allow me to ask your business."

"To deliver a message to you from my daughter, and she'd not allow me to deliver it to any one but yourself. I came three times to see you before your sickness, but I didn't find you at home."

"What's the message, Gerald?"

"The message, Bryan, is—that you are never to spake to her, nor will she ever more name your name. She will never be your wife; for she says that the heart that forgets its duty to God, and the hand that has been soiled by a bribe, can never be anything to her but the cause of shame and sorrow; and she bids me say that her happiness is gone and her heart broken. Now, farewell, and think of the girl you have lost by disgracin' your religion and your name."

Bryan paused for a moment, as if irresolute how to act, and exchanged glances with his high-minded little sister.

"Tell Kathleen, from me," said the latter, "that if she had a little more feeling, and a little less pride or religion, I don't know which, she'd be more of a woman and less of a saint. My brother, tell her, has disgraced neither his religion nor his name, and that he has too much of the pride of an injured man to give back any answer to sich a message. That's my answer, and not his, and you may ask her if it's either religion or common justice that makes her condemn him she loved without a hearing? Good-bye, now, Gerald; give my love to Hanna, and tell her she's worth a ship-load of her stately sister."

Bryan remained silent. In fact, he felt so completely overwhelmed that he was incapable of uttering a syllable. On seeing Cavanagh return, he was about to speak, when he looked upon the glowing cheeks, flashing eyes, and panting bosom of his heroic little sister.

"You are right, my darling Dora. I must be proud on receiving such a message. Kathleen has done me injustice, and I must be proud in my own defence."

The full burthen of this day's care, however, had not been yet laid upon him. On returning home, he heard from one of his laborers that a notice to quit his farm of Ahadarra had been left at his house. This, after the heavy sums of money which he had expended in its improvement and reclamation, was a bitter addition to what he was forced to suffer. On hearing of this last circumstance, and after perusing the notice which the man, who had come on some other message, had brought with him, he looked around him on every side for a considerable time. At length he said, "Dora, is not this a fine country?"

"It is," she replied, looking at him with surprise.

"Would you like," he added, "to lave it?"

"To lave it, Bryan!" she replied. "Oh, no, not to lave it;" and as she spoke, a deadly paleness settled upon her face.

"Poor Dora," he said, after surveying her for a time with an expression of love and compassion, "I know your saicret, and have done so this long time; but don't be cast down. You have been a warm and faithful little friend to me, and it will go hard or I'll befriend you yet."

Dora looked up into his face, and as she did, her eyes filled with tears. "I won't deny what you know, Bryan," she replied; "and unless he——"

"Well, dear, don't fret; he and I will have a talk about it; but, come what may, Dora, in this neglected and unfortunate country I will not stay. Here, now, is a notice to quit my farm, that I have improved at an expense of seven or eight hundred pounds, an' it's now goin' to be taken out of my hands, and every penny I expended on it goes into the pocket of the landlord or agent, or both, and I'm to be driven out of house and home without a single farthing of compensation for

"AN' THEN TO LIVE IN A COUNTRY WHERE I'D NOT SEE THESE OULD HILLS, THE GREEN GLENS, AND MOUNTAIN RIVERS ABOUT US, THAT HAVE ALL GROWN INTO MY HEART."—*Emigrants of Ahadarra*, p. 603.

the buildings and other improvements that I made on that farm."

"It's a hard and cruel case," said Dora; "an' there can be no doubt but that the landlord and Fethertonge are both a pair of great rogues. Can't you challenge them, an' fight them?"

"Why, what a soldier you are, Dora!" replied her brother, smiling; "but you don't know that their situation in life and mine puts that entirely out o' the question. If a landlord was to be called upon to fight every tenant he neglects, or is unjust to, he would have a busy time of it. No, no, Dora dear, my mind's made up. We will lave the country. We will go to America; but, in the mean time, I'll see what I can do for you."

"Bryan, dear," she said in a voice of entreaty, "don't think of it. Oh, stay in your own country. Sure what other country could you like as well?"

"I grant you that, Dora; but the truth is, there seems to be a curse over it; whatever's the raison of it, nothing goes right in it. The landlords in general care little about the state and condition of their tenantry. All they trouble themselves about is their rents. Look at my own case, an' that's but one out of thousands that's happenin' every day in the country. Grantin' that he didn't sarve me with this notice to quit, an' supposin' he let me stay in the farm, he'd rise it on me in sich a way as that I could hardly live in it; an' you know, Dora, that to be merely strugglin' an' toilin' all one's life is anything but a comfortable prospect. Then, in consequence of the people dependin' upon nothing but the potato for food, whenever that crop fails, which, in general, it does every seventh or eighth year, there's a famine, an' then the famine is followed by fever an' all kinds of contagious diseases, in sich a way that the kingdom is turned into one great hospital and grave-yard. It's these things that's sendin' so many thousands out of the country; and if we're to go at all, let us go like the rest, while we're able to go, an' not wait till we become too poor either to go or stay with comfort."

"Well, I suppose," replied his sister, "that what you say is true enough; but for all that I'd rather bear anything in my own dear country than go to a strange one. Do you think I'd not miss the summer sun rising behind the Althadawan hills? an' how could I live without seein' him set behind Mallybeney? An' then to live in a country where I'd not see these ould hills, the green glens, and mountain rivers about us, that have all grown into my heart. Oh, Bryan, dear, don't think of it—don't think of it."

"Dora," replied the other, his fine countenance overshadowed with deep emotion as he spoke, "you cannot love these ould hills, as you call them, nor these beautiful glens, nor the mountain rivers better than I do. It will go to my heart to leave them; but leave them I will—ay, and when I go, you know that I will leave behind me one that's dearer ten thousand times than them all. Kathleen's message has left me a heavy and sorrowful heart."

"I pity her now," replied the kind-hearted girl; "but, still, Bryan, she sent you a harsh message. Ay, I pity her, for did you observe how the father looked when he said that she bid him tell you her happiness was gone, and her heart broken; still, she ought to have seen yourself and heard your defence."

"I can neither blame her, nor will; neither can I properly justify my vote, I grant; it was surely very wrong or she wouldn't feel it as she does. Indeed I think I oughtn't to have voted at all."

"I differ with you there, Bryan," replied Dora, with animation, "I would rather, ten times over, vote wrongly, than not vote from cowardice. It's a mane, skulkin', shabby thing, to be afeard to vote when one *has* a vote—it's unmanly."

"I know it is; and it was that very thought that made me vote. I felt that it *would* look both mane and cowardly not to vote, and accordingly I did vote."

"Ay, and you did right," replied his spirited sister, "and I don't care who opposes you, I'll support you for it, through thick and thin."

"And I suppose you may say through right and wrong, too?"

"Ay, would I," she replied; "eh?—what am I sayin?—throth, I'm a little madcap, I think. No, I won't support you through right and wrong—it's only when you're right you may depend *on me*."

They had now been more than an hour strolling about the fields, when Bryan, who did not feel himself quite so strong as he imagined he was, proposed to return to his father's, where, by the way, he had been conveyed from the chapel on the Sunday when he had been so severely maltreated.

They accordingly did so, for he felt himself weak, and unable to prolong his walk to any greater distance.

CHAPTER XXI.

Thomas M'Mahon is forced to determine on Emigration.

GERALD CAVANAGH felt himself secretly relieved by the discharge of his message to M'Mahon.

"It is good," thought he, "to have that affair settled, an' all expectation of her marriage with him knocked up. I'll be bound a little time will cool the foolish girl, and put Edward Burke in the way of succeedin.' As for Hycy, I see clearly that whoever is to succeed, he's not the man—an' the more the pity, for the sorra one of them all so much the gentleman, nor will live in sich style."

The gloom which lay upon the heart of Kathleen Cavanagh was neither moody nor captious, but on the contrary remarkable for a spirit of extreme gentleness and placidity. From the moment she had come to the resolution of discarding M'Mahon, she was observed to become more silent than she had ever been, but at the same time her deportment was characterized by a tenderness towards the other members of the family that was sorrowful and affecting to the last degree. Her sister Hanna's sympathy was deep and full of sorrow. None of them, however, knew her force of character, nor the inroads which, under guise of this placid calm, strong grief was secretly making on her health and spirits. The paleness, for instance, which settled on her cheeks, when the news of her lover's apostacy, as it was called, and as she considered it, reached her, never for one moment left it afterwards, and she resembled some exquisitely chiselled statue moving by machinery, more than anything else to which we can compare her.

She was sitting with Hanna when her father returned, after having delivered her message to M'Mahon. The old man seemed, if one could judge by his features, to feel rather satisfied, as in fact was the case, and after having put up his good hat, and laid aside his best coat, he said, "I have delivered your message, Kathleen, an' dear knows I'm glad there's an end to that business—it never had my warm heart."

"It always had mine, then," replied Hanna, "an' I think we ought not to judge our fellow creatures too severely, knowin' as we do that there's no such thing as perfection in this world. What the sorra could have come over him, or tempted him to vote as he did? What did he say, father, when you brought him the message?"

"Afther I declared it," replied her father, "he was struck dumb, and never once opened his lips; but if *he* didn't spake, his sister Dora did."

"An' what did she say—generous and spirited little Dora!—what did she say, father?"

He then repeated the message as accurately as he could—for the honest old man was imbued with too conscientious a love for truth to disguise or conceal a single syllable that had been intrusted to him on either side—"Throth," said he, "the same Dora has the use of her tongue when she pleases; 'ax her,' said she, spakin' of Kathleen, here, 'if it's either religion or common justice that makes her condemn my brother without hearin' his defence. Good-bye, now,' says she; 'give my love to Hanna, and tell her 'she's worth a ship-load of her stately sister.'"

"Poor Dora!" exclaimed Hanna, whilst the tears came to her eyes, "who can blame her for defending so good and affectionate a brother? Plague on it for an election! I wish there was no sich thing in the country."

"As for me," said Kathleen, "I wouldn't condemn him without a hearing, if I had any doubt about his conduct, but I have not. He voted for Vanston—that can't be denied; and proved himself to have less honesty and scruple than even that profligate Hycy Burke; and if he made a bargain with Vanston, as is clear he did, an' voted for him because the other got his fine reduced, why that is worse, because then he did it knowingly an' with his eyes open, an' contrary to his conscience—ay, an' to his solemn promise to myself; for I'll tell you now what I never mentioned before, that I put him on his guard against doing so; and he knew that if he did, all would and must be over between him and me."

"Is that true, Kathleen?" said Hanna with surprise; "but why need I ask you such a question—it's enough that you say it—in that case then I give him up at last; but who, oh, who could a' believed it?"

"But that is not all," continued Kathleen, in the same mournful and resigned tone of voice—"there's the bribe—didn't hundreds hear him acknowledge publicly in the chapel that he got it? What more is wanting? How could I ever respect a man that has proved himself to be without either honesty or principle? and why should it happen, that the man who has so openly and so knowingly disgraced his religion and his name fall to *my* lot? Oh, no—it matters little how I love him, and I grant that in spite of all that has happened I have a lingering affection for him even yet; still I don't think that affection will live long—I can now neither respect or esteem him, an' when that is the case I can't surely continue long to love him. I know," she proceeded, "that it's not possible for him ever to clear himself of this shocking and shameful conduct; but lest there might be any chance of it, I now say before you all, that if something doesn't come about *within three months*, that may and ought to change my feelings towards

him, I'll live afterwards as if I had never known him."

"Mightn't you see him, however, an' hear what he has to say for himself?" asked Hanna.

"No," the other replied; "he heard my message, and was silent. You may rest assured if he had anything to say in his own defence, he would have said it, or asked to see me. Oh, no, no, because I feel that he's defenceless."

In this peculiar state of circumstances our readers need not feel surprised that every possible agency was employed to urge her beyond the declaration she had made, and to induce her to receive the addresses of Edward Burke. Her own parents, old Jemmy Burke, the whole body of her relatives, each in turn, and sometimes several of them together, added to which we may mention the parish priest, who was called in by both families, or at least by old Jemmy Burke and the Cavanaghs—all we say perpetually assailed her on the subject of a union with Edward Burke, and assailed her so pertinaciously, that out of absolute apathy, if not despair, and sick besides of their endless importunities, she at last said—"If Edward Burke can be satisfied with a wife that has no heart to give him, or that cannot love him, I don't care much how I am disposed of; he may as well call me wife as another, and better, for if I cannot love, I can at least respect him."

These circumstances, together with the period allowed to M'Mahon for setting himself, if possible, right with Kathleen, in due time reached his ears. It soon appeared, however, that Kathleen had not all the pride—if pride it could be called—to herself. M'Mahon, on being made acquainted with what had occurred, which he had heard from his sister Dora, simply said—"Since she has not afforded myself any opportunity of tellin' her the truth, I won't attempt to undeceive her. I will be as proud as she is. That is all I say."

"And you are right, Tom," replied Dora, "the name of M'Mahon mustn't be consarned with anything that's mane or discreditable. The pride of our old blood must be kept up, Tom; but still when we think of what she's sufferin' we musn't open our lips against her."

"Oh, no," he replied; "I know that it's neither harshness nor weakness, nor useless pride that makes her act as she's doin', but a great mind and a heart that's full of truth, high thoughts, and such a love for her religion and its prosperity as I never saw in any one. Still, Dora, I'm not the person that will ever sneak back to entreat and plead at her feet like a slave, and by that means make myself look still worse in her eyes; I know very well that if I did so she'd despise me. God bless her, at all events, and make her happy! that's the worst I wish her."

"Amen," replied Dora; "you have said nothing but the truth about her, and indeed, I see, Tom, that you know her well."

Thus ended the generous dialogue of Dora and her affectionate brother, who after all might have been induced by her to remain in his native country and share whatever fate it might allot him, were it not that in a few days afterwards, his father found that the only terms on which he could obtain *his* farm were such as could scarcely be said to come within the meaning and spirit of the landlord's adage, "live and let live." It is true that for the terms on which his farm was offered him he was indebted to Chevydale himself, who said that as he knew his father had entertained a high respect for old M'Mahon, he would not suffer him to be put out. The father besides voted for him, and always had voted for the family. "Do what you please with the son," he proceeded—"get rid of him as you like, but I shan't suffer the father to be removed. Let him have the farm upon reasonable terms; and, by the way, Fethertonge, don't you think now it was rather an independent act of the young fellow to vote for Vanston, although he knew that I had it in my power to send him about his business?"

"It was about as impudent a piece of gratitude and defiance as ever I witnessed," returned the other. "The wily rascal calculated upon your forbearance and easiness of disposition, and so imagined that he might do what he pleased with impunity. We shall undeceive him, however."

"Well, but you forget that he had some cause of displeasure against us, in consequence of having neglected his memorial to the Commissioners of Excise."

"Yes; but as I said before, how could we with credit involve ourselves in the illegal villany of a smuggler? It is actually a discredit to have such a fellow upon the estate. He is, in the first place, a bad example, and calculated by his conduct and influence to spread dangerous principles among the tenantry. However, as it is, he is, fortunately for us, rather well known at present. It is now perfectly notorious—and I have it from the best authority—one of the parties who was cognizant of his conduct—that his vote against you was the result of a deliberate compact with our enemy, Vanston, and that he received a bribe of fifty pounds from him. This he has had the audacity to acknowledge himself, being the very amount of the

sum to which the penalty against him was mitigated by Vanston's interference. In fact the scoundrel is already infamous in the country."

"What, for receiving a bribe!" exclaimed Chevydale, looking at the agent with a significant smile; "and what, pray, is the distinction between him who gives and him who takes a bribe? Let us look at home a little, my good Fethertonge, and learn a little charity to those who err as we do. A man would think now to hear you attack M'Mahon for bribery, that you never had bribed a man in your life; and yet you know that it is the consciousness of bribery on our own part that prevents us from attempting to unseat Vanston."

"That's all very true, I grant you," replied the other; "but in the mean time we must keep up appearances. The question, so far as regards M'Mahon, is—not so much whether he is corrupt or not, as whether he has unseated you; that is the fatal fact against him; and if we allow that to pass without making him suffer for it, you will find that on the next election he may have many an imitator, and your chances will not be worth much—that's all."

"Very well, Fethertonge," replied the indolent and feeble-minded man, "I leave him to you; manage him or punish him as you like; but I do beg that you will let me hear no more about him. Keep his father, however, on the property; I insist on that; he is an honest man, for he voted for me; keep him on his farm at reasonable terms too, such,—of course, as he can live on."

The reasonable terms proposed by Fethertonge were, however, such as old Tom M'Mahon could not with any prospect of independence encounter. Even this, however, was not to him the most depressing consideration. Faith had been wantonly and deliberately broken with him—the solemn words of a dying man had been disregarded—and, as Fethertonge had made him believe, by that son who had always professed to regard and honor his father's memory.

"I assure you, M'Mahon," replied the agent, in the last interview he ever had with him, "I assure you *I* have done all in my power to bring matters about; but without avail. It is a painful thing to have to do with an obstinate man, M'Mahon; with a man who, although he seems quiet and easy, will and must have everything his own way."

"Well, sir," replied M'Mahon, "you know what his dying father's words wor to me."

"And more than I know them, I can assure you, he whispered, in a very significant voice, and with a nod of the head that seemed to say, "your landlord knows them as well as I do. I have done my duty, and communicated them to him, as I ought."

M'Mahon shook his head in a melancholy manner, and said,—

"Well, sir, at any rate I know the worst. I couldn't now have any confidence or trust in such a man; I could depend upon neither his word or his promise; I couldn't look upon him as a friend, for he didn't prove himself one to my son when he stood in need of one. It's clear that he doesn't care about the welfare and prosperity of his tenantry; and for that raison—or rather for all these raisons put together—I'll join my son, and go to a country where, by all accounts, there's better prospects for them that's honest and industrious than there is in this unfortunate one of ours,—where the interests of the people is so much neglected—neglected! no, but never thought of at all! Good-bye, sir," he added, taking up his hat, whilst the features of this sterling and honest man were overcast with a solemn and pathetic spirit, "don't consider me any longer your tenant. For many a long year has our names been—but no matther—the time is come at last, and the M'Mahon's of Carriglass and Ahadarra will be known there no more. It wasn't our fault; we wor willin' to live—oh! not merely willin' to live, but anxious to die there; but it can't be. Good-bye, sir." And so they parted.

M'Mahon, on his return home, found Bryan, who now spent most of his time at Carriglass, before him. On entering the house his family, who were all assembled, saw by the expression of his face that his heart had been deeply moved, and was filled with sorrow.

"Bryan," said he, "you are right—as indeed you always are. Childre'," he proceeded, "we must lave the place that we loved so much; where we have lived for hundreds of years. This counthry isn't one now to prosper in, as I said not long since—this very day. We must lave the ould places, an' as I tould Fethertonge, the M'Mahons of Ahadarra and Carriglass will be the M'Mahons of Ahadarra and Carriglass no more; but God's will be done! I must look to the intherest of you all, childre'; but, God help us, that's what I can't do here for the future. Every one of sense and substance is doin' so, an' why shouldn't we take care of ourselves as well as the rest? What we want here is encouragement and fair play; but *fareer gair*, it isn't to be had."

The gloom which they read in his countenance was now explained, but this was not all; it immediately settled upon the other members of the family who were immediately moved,—all by sorrow, and some even to

tears. Dora, who, notwithstanding what her brother had said with regard to his intention of emigrating, still maintained a latent hope that he might change his mind, and that a reconciliation besides might yet be brought about between him and Kathleen, now went to her father, and, with tears in her eyes, threw her arms about his neck, exclaiming: "Oh, father dear, don't think of leaving this place, for how *could* we leave it? What other country could we ever like as well? and my grandfather—here he's creepin' in, sure he's not the same man within the last few months,—oh, how could you think of bringin' him, now that he's partly in his grave, an' he, she added, in a whisper full of compassion, "an' he partly dotin' with feebleness and age."

"Hush!" said her father, "we must say nothing of it to him. That must be kept a saicret from him, an' it's likely he won't notice the change."

Kitty then went over, and laying her hand on her father's arm, said: "Father, for the love of God, don't take us from Carriglass and Ahadarra:—whatever the world has for us, whether for good or evil, let us bear it here."

"Father, you won't bring us nor you won't go," added Dora; "sure we never could be *very* miserable here, where we have all been so happy."

"Poor Dora!" said Bryan, "what a mistake that is! I feel the contrary; for the very happiness that I and all of us enjoyed here, now only adds to what I'm sufferin'."

"Childre'," said the father, "our landlord has broken his own father's dyin' promise—you all remember how full of delight I came home to you from Dublin, and how she that's gone"—he paused—he covered his face with his open hands, through which the tears were seen to trickle. This allusion to their beloved mother was too much for them. Arthur and Michael sat in silence, not knowing exactly upon what grounds their father had formed a resolution, which, when proposed to him by Bryan, appeared to be one to which his heart could never lend its sanction. No sooner was their mother named, however, than they too became deeply moved, and when Kitty and Dora both rushed with an outcry of sorrow to their father, exclaiming, "Oh, father dear, think of her that's in the clay—for her sake, change your mind and don't take us to where we can never weep a tear over her blessed grave, nor ever kneel over it to offer a prayer within her hearin' for her soul!"

"Childre," he exclaimed, wiping away his tears that had indeed flowed in all the bitterness of grief and undeserved affliction; "childre'," he replied, "you must be manly now; it's because I love you an' feels anxious to keep you from beggary and sorrow at a future time, and destitution and distress, such as we see among so many about us every day in the week, that I've made up my mind to go. Our landlord wont give us our farm barrin' at a rent that 'ud bring us down day by day, to poverty and distress like too many of our neighbors. We have yet some thrifle o' money left, as much as will, by all accounts, enable us to take—I mane to purchase a farm in America—an' isn't it betther for us to go there, and be independent, no matther what it may cost our hearts to suffer by doin' so, than to stay here until the few hundre' that I've got together is melted away out of my pocket into the pocket of a landlord that never wanst throubles himself to know how we're gettin' on, or whether we're doin' well or ill. Then think of his conduct to Bryan, there; how he neglected him, and would let him go to ruin widout ever movin' a finger to save him from it. No, childre', undher sich a man I won't stay. Prepare yourselves, then, to lave this. In biddin' you to do so, I'm actin' for the best towards you all. I'm doin' my duty by you, and I expect for that raison, an' as obedient childre'—which I've ever found you—that you'll do your duty by me, an' give no further opposition to what I'm proposin' for your sakes. I know you're all loath—an' you will be loath—to lave this place; but do you think?—do you?—that I—I—oh, my God!—do you think, I say, that I'll feel nothing when we go? Oh! little you know of me if you think so! but, as I said, we must do our duty. We see our neighbors fallin' away into poverty, and distress, and destitution day by day, and if we remain in this unfortunate country, we must only folly in their tracks, an' before long be as miserable and helpless as they are."

His family were forced to admit the melancholy truth and strong sense of all he had uttered, and, although the resolution to which he had come was one of bitterness and sorrow to them all, yet from a principle of affection and duty towards him, they felt that any opposition on their part would have been unjustifiable and wrong.

"But, sure," the old man proceeded, "there's more than I've mentioned yet, to send us away. Look at poor Bryan, there, how he was nearly ruined by the villany of some cowardly scoundrel, or scoundrels, who set up a still upon his farm; that's a black' business, like many other black business that's a disgrace to the country—an inoffensive young man, that never made or did anything to make an enemy for himself, durin'

his whole life! An' another thing, bekaise he voted for the man that saved him from destruction, as he ought to do, an' as I'm proud he did do, listen now to the blackguard outcry that's against him; ay, and by a crew of vagabonds that 'ud sell Christ himself, let alone their country, or their religion, if they were bribed by Protestant goold for it! Throth I'm sick of the counthry and the people; for instead of gettin' betther, it's worse they're gettin' every day. Make up your minds then, childre'; there's a curse on the counthry. Many o' the landlords are bad enough, too bad, and too neglectful, God knows; but sure the people themselves is as bad, an' as senseless on the other hand; aren't they blinded so much by their bad feelin's, and short-sighted passions, that it is often the best landlords they let out their revenge upon. Prepare then, childre'; for out of the counthry, or at any irate from among the people, the poverty and the misery that's in it, wid God's assistance, we'll go while we're able to do so."

CHAPTER XXII.

Mystery Among the Hogans—Finigan Defends the Absent.

The three Hogans, whom we have lost sight of for some time, were, as our readers already know, three most unadulterated ruffians, in every sense of that most respectable term. Yet, singular as it may appear, notwithstanding their savage brutality, they were each and all possessed of a genius for mechanical inventions and manual dexterity that was perfectly astonishing when the low character of their moral and intellectual standard is considered. Kate Hogan, who, from her position, could not possibly be kept out of their secrets, at least for any length of time, was forced to notice of late that there was a much closer and more cautious intimacy between Hycy Burke and them than she had ever observed before. She remarked, besides, that not only was Teddy Phats excluded from their councils, but she herself was sent out of the way, whenever Hycy paid them a visit, which uniformly occurred at a late hour in the night.

Another circumstance also occurred about this time which puzzled her not a little: we mean the unusual absence of Philip for about a fortnight from home. Now, there certainly is nothing more offensive, especially to a female, than the fact of excluding her from the knowledge of any secret, a participation in which she may consider as a right. In her case she felt that it argued want of confidence, and as she had never yet betrayed any trust or secret reposed in her, she considered their conduct towards her, not merely as an insult, but such as entitled them to nothing at her hands but resentment, and a determination to thwart their plans, whatever they might be, as soon as she should succeed in making herself acquainted with them. What excited her resentment the more bitterly was the arrival of a strange man and woman in company with Philip, as she was able to collect, from the metropolis, to the former of whom they all seemed to look with much deference as to a superior spirit. Of the secret among them this man and his wife were clearly in possession, as was evident from their whisperings and other conversations, which they held apart, and uniformly out of her hearing. It is true the strangers did not reside with the Hogans, but in a small cabin adjacent to that in which Finigan taught his school. Much of the same way of thinking was honest Teddy Phats, whom they had now also abandoned, or rather completely cast off, and, what was still worse, deprived of the whole apparatus for distillation, which, although purchased by Hycy Burke's money, they very modestly appropriated to themselves. Teddy, however, as well as Kate, knew that they were never cautious without good reason, and as it had pleased them to *cut* him, as the phrase goes, so did he, as Kate had done, resolve within himself to penetrate their secret, if human ingenuity could effect it.

In this position they were when honest Philip returned, as we have said, after a fortnight's absence, from some place or places unknown. The mystery, however, did not end here. Kate observed that, as before, much of their conversation was held aloof from her, or in such enigmatical phrases and whisperings, as rendered the substance of it perfectly inscrutable to her. She observed, besides, that two of them were frequently absent from the kiln where they lived; but that one always remained at home to make certain that she should not follow or dog them to the haunt they frequented. This precaution on their part was uniform. As it was, however, Kate did not seem to notice it. On the contrary, no one could exhibit a more finished appearance of stupid indifference than she assumed upon these occasions, even although she knew by the removal of the tools, or a portion of them, that her friends were engaged in some business belonging to their craft. In this manner matters proceeded for some weeks subsequent to the period of Philip's return.

Kate also observed, with displeasure, that

among all those who joined in the outcry against Bryan M'Mahon, none made his conduct, such as it was conceived to have been, a subject of more brutal and bitter triumph than the Hogans. The only circumstance connected with him which grieved them to the heart, was the fact that the distillation plot had not ruined him as they expected it would have done. His disgrace, however, and unjust ejectment from Ahadarra filled them with that low, ruffianly sense of exultation, than which, coming from such scoundrels, there is scarcely anything more detestable in human nature.

One evening about this time they were sitting about the fire, the three brothers, Kate, and the young unlicked savages of the family, when Philip, after helping himself to a glass of spirits, said,—

"At any rate, there'll be no match between Miss Kathleen and that vagabond, Bryan M'Mahon. I think we helped to put a nail in his coffin there, by gob."

"Ay," said Kate, "an' you may boast of it, you unmanly vagabone; an' yet you purtind to have a regard for the poor girl, an' a purty way you tuck to show it—to have her as she is, goin' about wid a pale face an' a broken heart. Don't you see it's her more than him you're punishin', you savage of hell?"

"You had betther keep your tongue off o' me," he replied; "I won't get into grips wid you any more, you barge o' blazes; but, if you provoke me wid bad language, I'll give you a clink wid one o' these sotherin'-irons that'll put a clasp on your tongue."

"Never attempt that," she replied fiercely, "for, as sure as you do, I'll have this knife," showing him a large, sharp-pointed one, which, in accordance with the customs of her class, hung by a black belt of strong leather from her side—"I'll have this customer here greased in your puddins, my buck, and, when the win's out o' you, see what you'll be worth—fit for Captain James's hounds; although I dunno but the very dogs themselves is too clane to ait you."

"Come," said Bat, "we'll have no more o' this; do you, Philip, keep quiet wid your sotherin'-iron, and, as for you, Kate, don't dhraw me upon you; *na han an shin*—it isn't Philip you have. I say I'm right well plaised that we helped to knock up the match."

"Don't be too sure," replied Kate, "that it *is* knocked up; don't now, mind my words; an' take care that, instead of knockin' it up, you haven't knocked yourselves down. Chew your cud upon that now."

"What does she mane?" asked Ned, looking on her with a baleful glance, in which might be read equal ferocity and alarm.

"Why, traichery, of coorse," replied Philip, in his deep, glowing voice. "Kate," said her husband, starting into something like an incipient fit of fury, but suddenly checking himself—"Kate, my honey, what do you mane by them words?"

"What do I mane by them words?" she exclaimed, with an eye which turned on him with cool defiance; "pick that out o' your larnin', Bat, my pet. You can all keep your saicrets; an' I'll let you know that I can keep mine."

"Be the Holy St. Lucifer," said her husband, "if I wanst thought that traichery 'ud enter your head, I'd take good care that it's in hell you'd waken some fine mornin' afore long. So mind yourself, Kate, my honey."

"Are you in nobody else's power but mine?" she replied, "ax yourselves that—an' now do you mind yourself, Bat, my pet, and all o' yez."

"What is the raison," asked her husband, "that I see you an' Nanny Peety colloguin' an' huggermuggerin' so often together of late?"

"Ah," she replied, with a toss of disdain, "what a manly fellow you are to want to get into women's saicrets! you may save your breath though."

"Whatever you collogue about, all I say is, that I don't like a bone in the same Nanny Peety's body. She has an eye in her head that looks as if it knew one's thoughts."

"An' maybe it does. One thing I know, and every one knows it, that it's a very purty eye."

"Tell her, then, to keep out o' this; we want no spies here."

"Divil a word of it; she's my niece, an' the king's highway is as free to her as it is to you or anybody else. She'll be welcome to me any time she comes, an' let me see who'll dare to mislist her. She feels as she ought to do, an' as every woman ought to do, ay, an' every man, too, that is a man, or anything but a brute an' a coward—she feels for that unfortunate, heart-broken girl 'ithout; an' it'll be a strange thing if them that brought her to what she's sufferin' won't suffer themselves yet; there's a God above still, I hope, glory be to His name! Traichery!" she exclaimed; "ah, you ill-minded villains, it's yourselves you're thinkin' of, an' what you desarve. As for myself, it's neither you nor your villainy that's in my head, but the sorrowful heart that's in that poor girl 'ithout—ay, an' a broken one; for, indeed, broked it is; and it's not long she'll be troublin' either friend or foe in this world. The curse o' glory upon you all, you villains, and upon every one that had a hand in bringing her to this!"

Having uttered these words, she put her

cloak and bonnet upon her, and left the house, adding as she went out, "if it's any pleasure to you to know it, I'll tell you. I'm goin' to meet Nancy Peety this minute, an' you never seen sich colloguin' an' hugger-muggerin' as we'll have, plaise goodness—ah, you ill-thinkin', skulkin' villains!"

Kate Hogan, though a tigress when provoked, and a hardened, reckless creature, scarcely remarkable for any particular virtue that could be enumerated, and formidable from that savage strength and intrepidity for which she was so well known, was yet not merely touched by the sufferings of Kathleen Cavanagh, but absolutely took an interest in them, at once so deep and full of sympathy, as to affect her temper and disturb her peace of mind. Notwithstanding her character she was still a woman; and, in matters involving the happiness of an innocent and beautiful creature of her own sex, who had been so often personally kind to herself, and whose family were protectors and benefactors to her and her kindred, she felt as a woman. Though coarse-minded upon most many matters, she was yet capable of making the humane distinction which her brutal relatives could not understand or feel;—we mean the fact that, in having lent themselves to the base conspiracy planned and concocted by Hycy Burke, and in having been undoubtedly the cause of M'Mahon's disgrace, as well as of his projected marriage with Kathleen having been broken up, they did not perceive that she was equally a sufferer; or, if they did, they were either too cunning or too hardened to acknowledge it. For this particular circumstance, Kate, inasmuch as it involved deep ingratitude on their part, could not at all forgive them.

At this time, indeed, the melancholy position of Kathleen Cavanagh was one which excited profound and general sorrow; and just in proportion as this was sincere, so was the feeling of indignation against him whose corruption and want of principle were supposed to have involved her in their consequences. Two months or better of the period allotted by Kathleen to the vindication of his character, had now elapsed, and yet nothing had been done to set himself right either with her or the world. She consequently argued and with apparent reason, that everything in the shape of justification was out of his power, and this reflection only deepened her affliction. Yes, it deepened her affliction; but it did not on that account succeed in enabling her to obliterate his image the more easily from her heart. The fact was, that despite the force and variety of the rumors that were abroad against him—and each succeeding week brought in some fresh instance of his duplicity and profligacy, thanks to the ingenious and fertile malignity of Hycy the accomplished—despite of this, and despite of all, the natural reaction of her heart had set in—their past endearments, their confidence their tenderness, their love, now began, after the first vehement expression of pride and high principle had exhausted the offended mind of its indignation, to gradually resume their influence over her. A review, besides, of her own conduct towards her lover was by no means satisfactory to her. Whilst she could not certainly but condemn him, she felt as if she had judged him upon a principle at once too cold and rigorous. Indeed, now that a portion of time had enabled her mind to cool, she could scarcely understand why it was that she had passed so harsh a sentence upon him. She was not, however, capable of analyzing her own mind and feelings upon the occasion, or she might have known that her severity towards the man was the consequence, on her part, of that innate scorn and indignation which pure and lofty minds naturally entertain against everything dishonorable and base, and that it is a very difficult thing to disassociate the crime from the criminal, even in cases where the latter may have had a strong hold upon the affections of such a noble nature. Nay, the very fact of finding that one's affections have been fixed upon a person capable of such dishonor, produces a double portion of indignation at the discovery of their profligacy, because it supposes, in the first place, that something like imposture must have been practised upon us in securing our affections, or what is still more degrading, that we must have been materially devoid of common penetration, or we could not have suffered ourselves to become the dupe of craft and dissimulation.

Our high-minded heroine, however, had no other theory upon the subject of her own feelings, than that she loved her religion and its precepts, and detested every word that was at variance with truth, and every act inconsistent with honesty and that faithful integrity which resists temptation and corruption in whatever plausible shapes they may approach it.

Be this, however, as it may, she now found that, as time advanced, her heart began to fall into its original habits. The tumult occasioned by the shock resulting from her lover's want of integrity, had now nearly passed away, and the affection of the woman began to supersede the severity of the judge. By degrees she was enabled, as we have said, to look back upon her conduct, and to judge of her lover through the more softened medium of her reviving affection. This feeling

gained upon her slowly but surely, until her conscience became alarmed at the excess of her own severity towards him. Still, however, she would occasionally return, as it were, to a contemplation of his delinquency, and endeavor, from an unconscious principle of self-love, to work herself up into that lofty hatred of dishonor which had prompted his condemnation; but the effort was in vain. Every successive review of his guilt was attended by a consciousness that she had been righteous overmuch, and that the consequences of his treason, even against their common religion, were not only rapidly diminishing in her heart, but yielding to something that very nearly resembled remorse.

Such was the state of her feelings on the day when Kate Hogan and her male relatives indulged in the friendly and affectionate dialogue we have just detailed. Her heart was smitten, in fact, with sorrow for the harsh part she had taken against her lover, and she only waited for an opportunity to pour out a full confession of all she felt into the friendly ear of her sister.

Gerald Cavanagh's family at this period was darkened by a general spirit of depression and gloom. Their brother James, from whatever cause it may have proceeded, seemed to be nearly as much cast down as his sister; and were it not that Cavanagh himself and his wife sustained themselves by a hope that Kathleen might ultimately relax so far as to admit, as she had partly promised to do, the proposals of Edward Burke, it would have been difficult to find so much suffering apart from death under the same roof.

On the day in question, our friend O'Finigan, whose habits of intemperance had by no means diminished, called at Cavanagh's, as he had been in the habit of doing. Poor Kathleen was now suffering, besides, under the consequences of the injunction not to mention M'Mahon's name, which she had imposed upon her own family—an injunction which they had ever since faithfully observed. It was quite evident from the unusually easy fluency of O'Finigan's manner, that he had not confined his beverages, during the day, to mere water. Hanna, on seeing him enter, said to Kathleen, in a whisper,—

"Hadn't you better come out and take a walk, Kathleen? This O'Finigan is almost tipsy, and you know he'll be talking about certain subjects you don't wish to hear."

"Time enough, dear Hanna," she replied, with a sorrowful look at her sister, "my heart is so full of suffering and pain that almost anything will relieve it. You know I was always amused by Finigan's chat."

Her sister, who had not as yet been made acquainted with the change which had taken place in her heart, on hearing these words looked at her closely, and smiled sorrowfully, but in such a manner as if she had at that moment experienced a sensation of pleasure, if not of hope. Hitherto, whenever a neighbor or stranger came in, Kathleen, fearing that the forbidden name might become the topic of conversation, always retired, either to another room or left the house altogether, in order to relieve her own family from the painful predicament in which their promise of silence to her had placed them. On this occasion, however, Hanna perceived with equal surprise and pleasure that she kept her ground.

"Sit ye, merry jinteels!" said Finigan, as he entered; "I hope I see you all in good health and spirits; I hope I do; although I am afraid if what fame—an' by the way, Mrs. Cavanagh, my classicality tells me, that the poet Maro blundered like a Hibernian, when he made the same fame a trumpeter, in which, wid the exception of one point, he was completely out of keeping. There's not in all litherature another instance of a female trumpeter; and for sound raisons—if the fair sex were to get possession of the tuba, God help the world, for it would soon be a noisy one. However, let me recollect myself—where was I? Oh! ay—I am afraid that if what fame says—an' by the way, her trumpet must have been a speaking one—be true, that there's a fair individual here whose spirits are not of the most exalted character; and indeed, and as I am the noblest work of God—an honest man—I feel sorry to hear the fact."

The first portion of this address, we need scarcely say, was the only part of it which was properly understood, if we except a word or two at the close.

"God save you, Misther Finigan."

"O'Finigan, if you plase, Mrs. Cavanagh."

"Well, well," she replied, "O'Finigan, since it must be so; but in troth I can't always remember it, Misther Finigan, in regard that you didn't always stand out for it yourself. Is there any news stirrin', you that's abroad?"

"Not exactly news, ma'am; but current reports that are now no novelty. The M'Mahon's—"

"Oh, never mind *them*," exclaimed Mrs. Cavanagh, glancing at her daughter, "if you have any other news let us hear it—pass over the M'Mahons—they're not worth our talk, at least *some* o' them."

"Pardon me, Mrs. Cavanagh;—if Achilles at the head of his myrmidons was to inform me to that effect, I'd tell him he had mistaken his customer. My principle, ma'am—

and 'tis one I glory in—is to defend the absent in gineral, for it is both charitable and ginerous to do so—in gineral, I say; but when I know that they are unjustly aspersed, I contemplate it as an act of duty on my part to vindicate them."

"Well," replied Mrs. Cavanagh, "that's all very right an' thrue, Mr. Finigan."

"It is, Mr. Finig—O'Finigan," observed James Cavanagh, who was present, "and your words are a credit and an honor to you."

"Thanks, James, for the compliment; for it is but truth. The scandal I say (he proceeded without once regarding the hint thrown out by Mrs. Cavanagh) which has been so studiously disseminated against Bryan M'Mahon—spare your nods and winks, Mrs. Cavanagh, for if you winked at me with as many eyes as Argus had, and nodded at me wid as many heads as Hydra, or that baste in the Revelaytions, I'd not suppress a syllable of truth;—no, ma'am, the *suppressio veri's* no habit of mine; and I say and assert—ay, and asseverate—that that honest and high-spirited young man, named Bryan or Bernard M'Mahon, is the victim of villany and falsehood—ay, of devilish hatred and ingenious but cowardly vituperation."

"Kathleen," whispered her sister, "will you come out, darlin'? this talk must be painful to you."

Kathleen gave her a look of much mingled sorrow and entreaty as went to her heart. Hanna, whose head had been lovingly reclining on her sister's bosom, pressed her gently but affectionately to her heart, and made no reply.

"You wor always a friend of his," replied Mrs. Cavanagh, "an' of course you spake as a friend."

"Yes," said Finigan, "I always *was* a friend of his, because I always knew his honesty, his love of truth, his hatred of a mane action, ay, and his generosity and courage. I knew him from the very egg, I may say—*ab ovo*—Mrs. Cavanagh; it was I instilled his first principles into him. Oh! I know well! I never had a scholar I was so proud out of. Hycy Burke was smart, quick, and cunning; but then he was traicherous—something of a coward when he had his match—strongly addicted to fiction in most of his narratives, and what was still a worse point about him, he had the infamous ingenuity, whenever he had a point to gain—such as belying a boy and taking away his characther—of making truth discharge all the blackguard duties of falsehoood. Oh! I know them both well! But who among all I ever enlightened wid instruction was the boy that always tould the truth, even when it went against himself?—why, Bryan M'Mahon. Who ever defended the absent?—why, Bryan M'Mahon. Who ever and always took the part of the weak and defenceless against the strong and tyrannical?—why, Bryan M'Mahon. Who fought for his religion, too, when the young heretics used to turn it, or try to turn it, into ridicule—ay, and when cowardly and traicherous Hycy used to sit quietly by, and either put the insult in his pocket, or curry favor wid the young sneering vagabonds that abused it? And yet, at the time Hycy was a thousand times a greater little bigot than Bryan. The one, wid a juvenile rabble at his back, three to one, was a tyrant over the young schismatics; whilst Bryan, like a brave youth as he was, ever and always protected them against the disadvantage of numbers, and insisted on showing them fair play. I am warm, Mrs. Cavanagh," he continued, "and heat, you know, generates thirst. I know that a drop o' the right sort used to be somewhere undher this same roof; but I'm afraid if the *fama clamosa* be thrue, that the side of the argument I have taken isn't exactly such as to guarantee me a touch at the native—that is, taking it for granted that there's any in the house."

This request was followed by a short silence. The Cavanagh's all, with the exception of Kathleen, looked at each other, but every eye was marked either by indecision or indifference. At length Hanna looked at her sister, and simply said, "dear Kathleen!"

"He has done," replied the latter, in a low voice, "what I had not the generosity to do—he has defended the absent."

"Darling Kathleen," Hanna whispered, and then pressed her once more to her heart. "You must have it, Mr. O'Finigan," said she—"you must have it, and that immediately;" and as she spoke, she proceeded to a cupboard from which she produced a large black bottle, filled with that peculiar liquid to which our worthy pedagogue was so devotedly addicted.

"Ah," said he, on receiving a bumper from the fair hand of Hanna, "let the M'Mahons alone for the old original—indeed I ought to say—aboriginal hospitality. Thanks, Miss Hanna; in the meantime I will enunciate a toast, and although we shall not draw very strongly upon sentiment for the terms, it shall be plain and pithy; here is 'that the saddle of infamy may be soon placed upon the right horse,' and maybe there's an individual not a thousand miles from us, and who is besides not altogether incognizant of the learned languages, including a tolerably comprehensive circle of mathematics, who will, to a certain extent,

contribute to the consummation of that most desirable event; here then, I repate, is the toast—'may the saddle of infamy soon be placed upon the right horse!'"

Having drunk off the glass, he turned the mouth of it down upon his corduroy breeches, as an intimation that he might probably find it necessary to have recourse to it again.

Hanna observed, or rather we should say, felt, that as Finigan proceeded with his reminiscences of M'Mahon's school-boy days and the enumeration of his virtues, her sister's heart and bosom quivered with deep and almost irrepressible emotion. There was a good deal of enthusiasm in the man's manner, because he was in earnest, and it was quite evident that Kathleen's spirit had caught it as he went along, and that her heart recognized the truth of the picture which he was drawing. We say she literally felt the quiverings of her sister's heart against her own, and to do the admirable girl justice, she rejoiced to recognize these manifestations of returning affection.

"It was only yesterday," continued Finigan, resuming the discourse, "that I met Bryan M'Mahon, and by the way, he has sorrow and distress, poor fellow, in his face. 'Bryan,' said I, 'is it true that you and your father's family are preparing to go to that *refugium peccatorum*, America—that overgrown cupping-glass which is drawing the best blood of our country out of it?'

"'The people of Ireland,' he replied, 'have a right to bless God that there is such a country to fly to, and to resave them from a land where they're neglected and overlooked. It *is* true, Mr. O'Finigan,' he proceeded—'we have nothing in this country to live for now.'

"'And so you are preparing?' I asked.

"'I ought rather say,' he replied, 'that we *are* prepared; we go in another month; I only wish we were there already.'

"'I fear, Bryan,' said I, 'that you have not been well trated of late.' He looked at me with something like surprise, but said nothing; 'and in a quarter,' I added, 'that was the last from which you were prepared to expect justice without mercy.'

"'I don't understand you,' he replied sharply; 'what do you mean?'

"'Bryan,' said I, 'I scorn a moral circumbendibus where the direct truth is necessary; I have heard it said, and I fear it is burthened wid too much uncomfortable veracity, that Kathleen Cavanagh *has donned the black cap** in doing the judicial upon you, and that she considers her sentence equal to the laws of the Medes and Persians, unchangeable—or, like those of our own blessed church—wid reverence be the analogy made—altogether infallible.' His eye blazed as I spoke; he caught me here by the collar wid a grip that made me quake—'Another word against Kathleen Cavanagh,' he replied, 'and I will shake every joint of your carcass out of its place.' His little sister, Dora, was wid him at the time; 'Give him a shake or two as it is,' she added, egging him on, 'for what he has said already;' throth she's a lively little lady that, an' if it wasn't that she has a pair of dark shining eyes, and sweet features—ay, and as coaxin' a figure of her own—however, sorra may care, somehow, I defy any one to be angry wid her."

"Come, Mr. O'Finigan," said James, approaching him, "you must have another glass."

"Well no, James," he replied, "I think not."

"Faith, but I say you will; if it was only to hear what Dora—hem—what Bryan said."

"Very well," said the master, allowing him to take the glass which he received again brimming, "thanks, James."

"'Well,' said Bryan, lettin' go my collar, 'blame any one you like; blame me, blame Vanston, blame Chevydale, Fethertonge, anybody, everybody, the Priest, the Bishop, the Pope,—but don't dare to blame Kathleen Cavanagh.'

"'Why,' said I, 'has she been right in her condemnation of you?'

"'She has,' he replied, with a warmth of enthusiasm which lit up his whole features; 'she has done nothing but what was right. She just acted as she ought, and all I can say is, that I know I'm not worthy of her, and never was. God bless her!'

"'And don't let *me* hear,' said Dora, taking up the dialogue, 'that ever you'll mention her name wid disrespect—mark that, Mr. O'Finigan, or it'll be worse for you a thrifle.'

"Her brother looked on her wid complacent affection, and patting her on the head, said, 'Come, darling, don't beat him now. You see the risk you run,' he added, as they went away, 'so don't draw down Dora's vengeance on your head. She might forgive you an offence against *herself;* but she won't forgive you one against Kathleen Cavanagh; and, Mister O'Finigan, *neither will I.*'"

"Masther," said James Cavanagh, "you'll stop to-night with us?"

"No, James, I have an engagement of more importance than you could ever dhrame

* Alluding to the practice of putting on the black cap when the Judge condemns a felon to death.

of, and about—but I'm not free or at liberty to develop the plot—for plot it is—at any greater length. Many thanks to you in the mane time for your hospitable intentions; but before I go, I have a word to say. Now, what do you think of that young man's ginerosity, who would rather have himself thought guilty than have her thought wrong; for, whisper,—I say he's *not* guilty, and maybe—but, no matther, time will tell, and soon tell, too, plaise God."

So saying he took up his hat, and politely wished them a pleasant evening, but firmly refused to taste another drop of liquor, "lest," he added, "it might denude him of the necessary qualifications for accomplishing the enterprise on which he was bint."

When he was gone, Kathleen brought her sister to their own room, and throwing herself on her bosom, she spoke not, but wept calmly and in silence for about twenty minutes.

"Kathleen," said Hanna, "I am glad to see this, and I often wished for it."

"Whisht, dear Hanna," she replied; "don't speak to me at present. I'm not fit to talk on that unfortunate subject yet. 'Forgive us our trespassess as we—we—forgive them that trespass against us!' Oh! Hanna darling, how have *I* prayed?" They then rejoined the family.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Harry Clinton's Benevolence Defeated—His Uncle's Treachery—The Marriage of Kathleen and Edward Burke Determined on.

This partial restoration of M'Mahon to the affections of Kathleen Cavanagh might have terminated in a full and perfect reconciliation between them, were it not for circumstances which we are about to detail. From what our readers know of young Clinton, we need not assure them that, although wild and fond of pleasure, he was by no means devoid of either generosity or principle. There were indeed few individuals, perhaps scarcely any, in the neighborhood, who felt a deeper or manlier sympathy for the adverse fate and evil repute which had come so suddenly, and, as he believed in his soul, undeservedly, upon Bryan M'Mahon. He resolved accordingly to make an effort for the purpose of setting the unfortunate young man's character right with the public, or if not with the public, at least in that quarter where such a service might prove most beneficial to him, we mean in Gerald Cavanagh's family. Accordingly, one morning after breakfast as his uncle sat reading the newspaper, he addressed him as follows:—

"By the way, uncle, you must excuse me for asking you a question or two."

"Certainly, Harry. Did I not often desire you never to hesitate asking me any question you wish? Why should you not?"

"This, however, may be trenching a little upon the secrets of your—your—profession."

"What is it?—what is it?"

"You remember the seizure you made some time ago in the townland of Ahadarra?"

"I do perfectly well."

"Now, uncle, excuse me. Is it fair to ask you if you know the person who furnished you with information on that subject. Mark, I don't wish nor desire to know his name; I only ask if *you* know it?"

"No, I do not."

"Do you not suspect it? It came to you anonymously, did it not?"

"Why, you are raking me with a fire of cross-examination, Harry; but it did."

"Should you wish to know, uncle?"

"Undoubtedly, I wish to know those to whom we are indebted for that fortunate event."

"Don't say *we*, uncle; speak only for yourself."

"I should wish to know, though."

"Pray have you the letter?"

"I have: you will find it in one of the upper pigeon holes; I can't say which; towards the left hand. I placed it there yesterday, as it turned up among some other communications of a similar stamp."

In a few moments his nephew returned, with the precious document in his hands.

"Now, uncle," he proceeded, as he seated himself at the table, "you admit that this is the letter?"

"I admit—why, you blockhead, does not the letter itself prove as much?"

"Well, then, I know the scoundrel who sent you this letter."

"I grant you he is a scoundrel, Harry; nobody, I assure you, despises his tools more than I do, as in general every man does who is forced to make use of them. Go on."

"The man who sent you that letter was Hycy Burke."

"Very likely," replied the cool old Still-Hound; "But I did not think he would ever place us—"

"*You*, sir, if you please."

"Very well, *me*, sir, if you please, under such an important obligation to him. How do you know, though, that it was he who sent it?"

His nephew then related the circumstance of his meeting with Nanny Peety, and the

discovery which he had made through her of the letter having been both written and sent by Hycy to the post-office. In order, besides, to satisfy his relative that the getting up of the still was a plan concocted by Hycy to ruin M'Mahon, through the medium of the fine, he detailed as much of Hycy's former proposal to him as he conveniently could, without disclosing the part which he himself had undertaken to perform in this concerted moment.

"Well, Harry," replied the old fellow after a pause, "he's a d—d scoundrel, no doubt; but as his scoundrelism is his own, I don't see why we should hesitate to avail ourselves of it. With respect, however, to M'Mahon, I can assure you, that I was informed of his intention to set up a Still a good while before I made the capture, and not by anonymous information either. Now, what would you say if both I and Fethertonge knew the whole plot long before it was put in practice?"

As he spoke, he screwed his hard keen features into a most knavish expression."

"Yes," he added; "and I can tell you that both the agent and I forwarned M'Mahon against suffering himself to engage in anything illegal—which was our duty as his friends you know—hem!"

"Is that possible?" said his nephew, blushing for this villianous admission.

"Quite possible," replied the other; "however, as I said, I don't see why we should hesitate to avail ourselves of his villany."

"That is precisely what I was about to say, sir," replied his nephew, still musing on what he had heard.

"Right, Harry; the farm is a good thing, or will be so, at least."

"The farm, sir! but I did not speak with reference to the farm."

"Then with reference to *what* did you speak?"

"I meant, sir, that we should not hesitate to avail ourselves of his villany, in setting M'Mahon right with the public as far as we could."

"With the whole public!—whew! Why, my good young man, I thought the days of giants and windmills had gone by."

"Well, sir," continued the nephew, "at all events there is one thing you must do for me. I wish you to see old Gerald Cavanagh, and as far as you can to restore his confidence in the honesty and integrity of young M'Mahon. State to him that you have reason to know that his son has a bitter enemy in the neighborhood; that great injustice had been done to him in many ways, and that you would be glad that a reconciliation should take place between the families."

"And so I am to set out upon the wild goose chase of reconciling a wench and a fellow, without knowing why or wherefore."

"No, sir—not at all—I will make Cavanagh call upon you."

"I don't understand this," replied the uncle, rubbing behind his ear; "I don't perceive; but pray what interest have you in the matter?"

"Upon my honor, uncle, none in life, unless an anxiety to serve poor M'Mahon. The world is down upon him about that vote which, considering all the circumstances, was more creditable to him than otherwise. I know, however, that in consequence of the estrangement between him and Miss Cavanagh, he is bent on emigrating. *It is that fact which presses upon him most.* Now will you oblige me in this, uncle?"

"Let Cavanagh call upon me," he replied, "and if I can say anything to soften the old fellow, perhaps I will."

"Thank you, uncle—thank you—I shall not forget this kindness."

"Well, then," said his uncle, "I am going down to Fethertonge on a certain matter of business, you understand, and—let me see—why, if Cavanagh calls on me to-morrow about eleven, I shall see him at all events."

Young Clinton felt surprised and grieved at what his uncle had just hinted to him; but on the other hand, he felt considerably elated at the prospect of being able to bring about a reconciliation between these two families, and with this excellent motive in view he went to Cavanagh, with whom he had a private conversation. Having been made aware by M'Mahon himself of Cavanagh's prejudice against him, and the predilections of himself and his wife for an alliance into Burke's family, he merely told him that his uncle would be glad to see him the next day about eleven o'clock, upon which the other promised to attend to that gentleman.

Old Clinton, on his way to Fethertonge's, met that worthy individual riding into Ballymacan.

"I was going down to you," said he; "but where are you bound for?"

"Into town," replied the agent; "have you any objection to ride that way?"

"None in the world; it is just the same to me. Well, how are matters proceeding?"

"Not by any means well," replied the other, "I begin to feel something like alarm. I wish we had those M'Mahons out of the country. Vanston has paid that d—d goose Chevydale a visit, and I fear that unless the Ahadarra man and his father, and the whole crew of them, soon leave the country, we shall break down in our object."

"Do you tell me so?" said the gauger, starting; "by Jove, it is well I know this in time."

"I don't understand."

"Why," continued Clinton, "I was about to take a foolish step to-morrow morning, for the express purpose, I believe, of keeping him, and probably the whole family in the country."

He then detailed the conversation that he had with his nephew, upon which Fethertonge convinced him that there was more in the wind with respect to that step, than either he or his nephew, who he assured him was made a cat's paw of in the business, suspected. "That's a deep move," said the agent, "but we shall defeat them, notwithstanding. Everything, however, depends upon their leaving the country before Chevydale happens to come at the real state of the case; still, it will go hard or we shall baffle both him and them yet."

Whether Clinton was sure that the step urged upon him by his nephew was the result of a generous regard for M'Mahon, or that the former was made a mere tool for ultimate purposes, in the hands of the Ahadarra man, as he called him it is not easy to determine. Be this as it may, when the hour of eleven came the next morning, he was prepared to set his nephew's generosity aside, and act upon Fethertonge's theory of doing everything in his power to get the whole connection out of the country, "Ha," he exclaimed, "I now understand what Harry meant with respect to their *emigration*—'*It is that fact which presses upon him most.*' Oh ho! is it so, indeed! Very good, Mr. M'Mahon—we shall act accordingly."

Gerald Cavanagh had been made acquainted by his wife on the day before with the partial revival of his daughter's affection for Bryan M'Mahon, as well as with the enthusiastic defense of him made by Finigan, two circumstances which gave him much concern and anxiety. On his return, however, from Clinton's, his family observed that there was something of a satisfactory expression mingled up with a good deal of grave thought in his face. The truth is, if the worthy man thought for a moment that the ultimate loss of M'Mahon would have seriously injured her peace of mind, he would have bitterly regretted it, and perhaps encourage a reconciliation. This was a result, however, that he could scarcely comprehend. That she might fret and pine for a few months or so was the worst he could calculate upon, and of course he took it for granted, that the moment her affection for one was effaced, another might step in, without any great risk of disappointment.

"Well, Gerald," said his wife, "what did Gauger Clinton want with you?"

Gerald looked at his two daughters and sighed unconsciously. "It's not good news," he proceeded, "in one sense, but it is in another; it's good news to all my family but that girl sittin' there," pointing to Kathleen.

Unfortunately no evil intelligence could have rendered the unhappy girl's cheek paler than it was; so that, so far as appearances went, it was impossible to say what effect this startling communication had upon her.

"I was down wid Misther Clinton," he proceeded; "he hard a report that there was about to be a makin' up of the differences between Kathleen there and Bryan, and he sent for me to say, that, for the girl's sake—who he said was, as he had hard from all quarthers, a respectable, genteel girl—he couldn't suffer a young man so full of thraichery and desate, as he had good raisons to know Bryan M'Mahon was, to impose himself upon her or her family. He cautioned me," he proceeded, "and all of us against him; and said that if I allowed a marriage to take place between him and my daughter, he'd soon bring disgrace upon her and us, as well as himself. 'You may take my word for it, Mr. Cavanagh,' says he, 'that is not a thrifle 'ud make me send for you in sich a business; but, as I happen to know the stuff he is made of, I couldn't bear to see him take a decent family in so distastefully. To my own knowledge, Cavanagh,' said he, 'he'd desave a saint, much less your innocent and unsuspectin' daughter.'"

"But, father," said Hanna, "you know there's not a word of truth in that report; and mayn't all that has been said, or at least some of what has been said against Bryan, be as much a lie as that? Who on earth could sich a report come from?"

"I axed Mr. Clinton the same question," said the father, "and it appears that it came from Bryan himself."

"Oh, God forbid!" exclaimed Hanna; "for, if it's a thing that he said that, he'd say anything."

"I don't know," returned the father, "I only spake it as I hard it, and, what is more, I believe it—I believe it after what I hard this day; everybody knows him now—man, woman, an' child. *Cheernah!* what an escape that innocent girl had of him!"

Kathleen rose up, went over to her father, and, placing her hand upon his shoulder, was about to speak, but she checked herself; and, after looking at them all, as it were by turns, with a look of distraction and calm but concentrated agony, she returned again to her seat, but did not sit down.

"After all," she exclaimed, "there has

been no new crime brought against him, not one; but, if I acted wrongly and ungenerously once, I won't do so again. Hanna, see his sister Dora, say I give him the next three weeks to clear himself; and, father, listen! if he doesn't do so within that time, take me, marry me to Edward Burke if you wish—of course Hycy's out of the question—since you must have it so, for the sooner I go to my grave the better. There's his last chance, let him take it; but, in the mean time, listen to me, one and all of you. I cannot bear this long; there's a dry burning pain about my heart, and a weight upon it will soon put me out of the reach of disappointment and sorrow. Oh, Bryan M'Mahon, can you be what is said of you! and, if you can, oh, why did we ever meet, or why did I ever see you!"

Her sister Hanna attempted to console her, but for once she failed. Kathleen would hear no comfort, for she said she stood in need of none.

"My mind is all dark," said she, "or rather it is sick of this miserable work. Why am I fastened upon by such suffering and distraction? Don't attempt at present to console me, Hanna; I won't, because I can't be consoled. I wish I knew this man—whether he is honest or not. If he is the villain they say he is, and that with a false mask upon him, he has imposed himself on me, and gained my affections by hypocrisy and deceit, why, Hanna, my darling sister, I could stab him to the heart. To think that I ever should come to love a villain that could betray his church, his country, me—and take a bribe; yes, he has done it," she proceeded, catching fire from the force of her own detestation of what was wrong. "Here, Hanna, I call back my words—I give him no further warning than he has got: he knows the time, the greater part of it is past, and has he ever made a single attempt to clear himself? No, because he cannot. I despise him; he is unworthy of me, and I fear he ever was. Here, father," she said with vehemence, "listen to me, my dear father; and you, my mother, beloved mother, hear me! At the expiration of three weeks I will marry Edward Burke; he is a modest, and I think an honest young man, who would not betray his religion nor his country, nor—nor—any unhappy girl that might happen to love him; oh, no, he would not—and so, after three weeks—I will marry him. Go now and tell him so—say I said so; and you may rest assured I will not break my word, although—I may break—break my heart—my heart! Now, Hanna, come out and walk, dear—come out, and let us chat of other matters; yes, of other matters; and you can tell me candidly whether you think Bryan M'Mahon such a villain." Struck by her own words she paused almost exhausted, and, bending down, put her face upon her hands, and by a long persevering effort, at length raised her head, and after a little time appeared to have regained a good deal of composure; but not without tears—for she had wept bitterly.

On that night she told her sister that the last resolution she had come to was that by which she was determined to abide.

"You would not have me like a mere girl," she said, "without the power of knowing my own mind—no; let what may come I will send no messages after him—and as sure as I have life I will marry Edward Burke after the expiration of three weeks, if Bryan doesn't—but it's idle to talk of it—if he could he would have done it before now. Good-night, dear Hanna—good-night," and after many a long and heavy sigh she sank to an uneasy and troubled slumber.

The next morning Gerald Cavanagh, who laid great stress upon the distracted language of his daughter on the preceding night paid an early visit to his friend, Jemmy Burke. He found the whole family assembled at breakfast, and after the usual salutations, was asked to join them, which invitation, however, having already breakfasted, he declined. Hycy had of late been very much abroad—that is to say he was out very much at night, and dined very frequently in the head-inn of Ballymacan, when one would suppose he ought to have dined at home. On the present occasion he saluted honest Gerald with a politeness peculiarly ironical.

"Mr. Cavanagh," said he, "I hope I see you in good health, sir. How are all the ladies?—Hannah, the neat, and Kathleen—ah, Kathleen, the divine!"

"Troth, they're all very well, I thank you, Hycy; and how is yourself?"

"Free from care, Mr. Cavanagh—a chartered libertine."

"A libertine!" exclaimed the honest farmer; "troth I've occasionally heard as much; but until I heard it from your own lips divil a word of it I believed."

"He is only jesting, Mr. Cavanagh," said his brother; "he doesn't mean exactly, nor indeed at all, what you suppose he does."

"Does he mean anything at all, Ned?" said his father, dryly, "for of late it's no aisy matther to understand him."

"Well said, Mr. Burke," replied Hycy; "I am like yourself, becoming exceedingly oracular of late—but, Mr. Cavanagh, touching this exquisite union which is contemplated between Adonis and Juno the ox-eyed—does it still hold good, that, provided always she cannot secure the corrupt clod-

hopper, she will in that case condescend upon Adonis?"

"Gerald," said the father, "as there's none here so handy at the nonsense as to understand him, the best way is to let him answer himself."

"Begad, Jemmy," said Cavanagh, "to tell you the truth, I haven't nonsense enough to answer the last question at any rate; unless he takes to speakin' common-sense I won't undhertake to hould any further discourse wid him."

"Why will you continue," said his brother in a low voice, "to render yourself liable to these strong rebuffs from plain people?"

"Well said, most *vituline*—Solomon secundus, well said."

"Hycy," said his mother, "you ought to remimber that every one didn't get the edication you did—an' that ignorant people like your father and Gerald Kavanagh there can't undhercomestand one-half o' what you say. Sure they know nothing o' book-larnin', and why do you give it them?"

"Simply to move their metaphysics, Mrs. Burke. They are two of the most notorious metaphysicians from this to themselves; but they don't possess your powers of ratiocination, madam?"

"No," replied his father; "naither are we sich judges of horseflesh, Hycy."

Hycy made him a polite bow, and replied, "One would think that joke is pretty well worn by this time, Mr. Burke. Couldn't you strike out something original now?"

"All I can say is," replied the father, "that the joke has betther bottom than the garran it was made upon."

Edward now arose and left the parlor, evidently annoyed at the empty ribaldry of his brother, and in a few minutes Hycy mounted his horse and rode towards Ballymacan.

It is not our intention here to follow Gerald Cavanagh in the account, unconsciously one sided as it was, of the consent which he assured them Kathleen had given, on the night before, to marry their son Edward. It is sufficient to say, that before they separated, the match was absolutely made by the two worthies, and everything arranged, with the exception of the day of marriage, which they promised to determine on at their next meeting.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Thoughts on Our Country and Our Countrymen—Dora and Her Lover.

The state of the country, at this period of our narrative, was full of gloom and depression. Spring had now set in, and the numbers of our independent and most industrious countrymen that flocked towards our great seaports were reckoned by many thousands; and this had been the case for many a season previously. That something was wrong, and that something is wrong in the country must, alas! be evident from the myriads who, whilst they have the means in their hands, are anxious to get out of it as fast as they can. And yet there is not a country in the world, a population so affectionately attached to the soil—to the place of their birth—as the Irish. In fact, the love of their native fields, their green meadows, the dark mountains, and the glorious torrents that gush from them, is a passion of which they have in foreign lands been often known to die. It is called *Home Sickness*, and we are aware ourselves of more than one or two cases in which individuals, in a comparatively early stage of life, have pined away in secret after their native hills, until the malady becoming known, unfortunately too late, they sought once more the green fields and valleys among which they had spent their youth, just in time to lay down their pale cheeks and rest in their native clay for ever those hearts which absence and separation from the very soil had broken.

Now, nothing can be a greater proof of the pressure, the neglect, the hopelessness of independence or comfort, which the condition of the people, and the circumstances which occasioned it, have produced, than the fact that the strong and sacred attachment which we have described is utterly incapable of attaching them as residents in a country so indescribably dear to their best affections. People may ask, and do ask, and will ask, why Ireland is in such a peculiarly distressed state—why there is always upon its surface a floating mass of pauperism without parallel in Europe, or perhaps in the world? To this we reply simply because the duties of property have uniformly been neglected. And in what, may it be asked, do the duties of property consist? To this we reply again, in an earnest fixed resolution to promote, in the first place, the best social and domestic interests of the people, to improve their condition, to stock their minds with useful and appropriate knowledge, to see that they shall be taught what a sense of decent comfort means, that they shall not rest satisfied with a wad of straw for a bed, and a meal of potatoes for food, and that they shall, besides, come to understand the importance of their own position as members of civil society. Had the landlords of Ireland paid attention to these and other matters that directly involve their own welfare and independence, as well as those of their neglected

tenantry, they would not be, as they now are, a class of men, some absolutely bankrupt, and more on the very eve of it; and all this, to use a commercial phrase painfully appropriate,—*because they neglect their business.*

Who, until lately, ever heard of an Irish landlord having made the subject of property, or the principles upon which it ought to be administered, his study? By this we do not mean to say that they did not occasionally bestow a thought upon their own interests; but, in doing so, they were guided by erroneous principles that led them to place these interests in antagonism with those of the people. They forgot that poverty is the most fertile source of population, and that in every neglected and ill-regulated state of society, they invariably reproduce each other; but the landlords kept the people poor, and now they are surprised, forsooth, at their poverty and the existence of a superabundant population.

"We know," said they, "that the people are poor; but we know also that, by subsisting merely upon the potato, and excluding better food and a higher state of comfort, of course the more is left for the landlord." This in general was their principle—and its consequences are now upon themselves.

This, however, is a subject on which it is not our intention to expatiate here. What we say is, that, in all the relations of civil life, the people were shamefully and criminally neglected. They were left without education, permitted to remain ignorant of the arts of life, and of that industrial knowledge on which, or rather on the application of which, all public prosperity is based.

And yet, although the people have great errors, without which no people so long neglected can ever be found, and, although they have been for centuries familiarized with suffering, yet it is absolute dread of poverty that drives them from their native soil. They understand, in fact, the progress of pauperism too well, and are willing to seek fortune in any clime, rather than abide its approach to themselves—an approach which they know is in their case inevitable and certain. For instance, the very class of our countrymen that constitutes the great bulk of our emigrants is to be found among those independent small farmers who appear to understand something like comfort. One of these men holding, say sixteen or eighteen acres, has a family we will suppose of four sons and three daughters. This family grows up, the eldest son marries, and the father, having no other way to provide for him, sets apart three or four acres of his farm, on which he and his wife settle. The second comes also to marry, and hopes his father won't treat him worse than he treated his brother. He accordingly gets four acres more, and settles down as his brother did. In this manner the holding is frittered away and subdivided among them. For the first few years—that is, before their children rise—they may struggle tolerably well; but, at the expiration of twenty or twenty-five years, each brother finds himself with such a family as his little strip of land cannot adequately support, setting aside the claims of the landlord altogether; for rent in these cases is almost out of the question.

What, then, is the consequence? Why, that here is to be found a population of paupers squatted upon patches of land quite incapable of their support; and in seasons of famine and sickness, especially in a country where labor is below its value, and employment inadequate to the demand that is for it, this same population becomes a helpless burthen upon it—a miserable addition to the mass of poverty and destitution under which it groans.

Such is the history of one class of emigrants in this unhappy land of ours; and what small farmer, with such a destiny as that we have detailed staring him and his in the face, would not strain every nerve that he might fly to any country—rather than remain to encounter the frightful state of suffering which awaits him in this.

Such, then, is an illustration of the motives which prompt one class of emigrants to seek their fortune in other climes, while it is yet in their power to do so. There is still a higher class, however, consisting of strong farmers possessed of some property and wealth, who, on looking around them, find that the mass of destitution which is so rapidly increasing in every direction must necessarily press upon them in time, and ultimately drag them down to its own level. But even if the naked evils which pervade society among us were not capable of driving these independent yeomen to other lands, we can assure our legislators that what these circumstances, appalling as they are, may fail in accomplishing, the recent act for the extra relief of able-bodied paupers will complete—an act which, instead of being termed a Relief Act, ought to be called an act for the ruin of the country, and the confiscation of its property, both of which, if not repealed, it will ultimately accomplish. We need not mention here cases of individual neglect or injustice upon the part of landlords and agents, inasmuch as we have partially founded our narrative upon a fact of this description.

It has been said, we know, and in many

instances with truth, that the Irish are a negligent and careless people—without that perseverance and enterprise for which their neighbors on the other side of the channel are so remarkable. We are not, in point of fact, about to dispute the justice of this charge; but, if it be true of the people, it is only so indirectly. It is true of their condition and social circumstances in this country, rather than of any constitutional deficiency in either energy or industry that is inherent in their character. In their own country they have not adequate motive for action—no guarantee that industry shall secure them independence, or that the fruits of their labor may not pass, at the will of their landlords, into other hands. Many, therefore, of the general imputations that are brought against them in these respects, ought to be transferred rather to the depressing circumstances in which they are placed than to the people themselves. As a proof of this, we have only to reflect upon their industry, enterprise, and success, when relieved from the pressure of these circumstances in other countries — especially in America, where exertion and industry never, or at least seldom, fail to arrive at comfort and independence. Make, then, the position of the Irishman reasonable—such, for instance, as it is in any other country but his own—and he can stand the test of comparison with any man.

Not only, however, are the Irish flying from the evils that are to come, but they feel a most affectionate anxiety to enable all those who are bound to them by the ties of kindred and domestic affection to imitate their example. There is not probably to be found in records of human attachment such a beautiful history of unforgotten affection, as that presented by the heroic devotion of Irish emigrants to those of their kindred who remain here from inability to accompany them.*

Let it not be said, then, that the Irishman is deficient in any of the moral elements or natural qualities which go to the formation of such a character as might be made honorable to himself and beneficial to the country. By the success of his exertions in a foreign land, it is clear that he is not without industry, enterprise, and perseverance; and we have no hesitation in saying that, if he were supplied at home with due encouragement and adequate motive, his good qualities could be developed with as much zeal, energy, and success as ever characterized them in a foreign country.

We trust the reader may understand what the condition of the country, at the period of our narrative to which we refer, must have been, when such multitudes as we have described rushed to our great seaports in order to emigrate; the worst feature in this annual movement being that, whilst the decent, the industrious, and the moral, all influenced by creditable motives, went to seek independence in a distant land, the idle, the ignorant, and the destitute necessarily remain at home —all as a burthen, and too many of them as a disgrace to the country.

Our friends the M'Mahons, urged by

*The following extract, from a very sensible phamphlet by Mr. Murray, is so appropiate to this subject, that we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of quoting it here:—

"You have been accustomed to grapple with and master figures, whether as representing the produce of former tariffs, or in constructing new ones, or in showing the income and expenditure of the greatest nation on the earth. Those now about to be presented to you, as an appendix to this communication, are small, very small, in their separate amounts, and not by any means in the aggregate of the magnitude of the sums you have been accustomed to deal with; but they are large separately, and heaving large in the aggregate, in all that is connected with the higher and nobler parts of our nature—in all that relates to and evinces the feelings of the heart towards those who are of our kindred, no matter by what waters placed asunder or by what distance separated. They are large, powerfully large, in reading lessons of instruction to the statesman and philanthropist, in dealing with a warm-hearted people for their good, and placing them in a position of comparative comfort to that in which they now are. The figures represent the particulars of 7,917 separate Bills of Exchange, varying in amount from £1 to £10 each —a few exceeding the latter sum; so many separate offerings from the natives of Ireland who have heretofore emigrated from its shores, sent to their relations and friends in Ireland, drawn and paid between the 1st of January and the 15th of December, 1846—not quite one year; and amount in all to £41,261 9s. 11d. But this list, long though it be, does not measure the number and amount of such interesting offerings. It contains only about one-third part of the whole number and value of such remittances that have crossed the Atlantic to Ireland during the 349 days of 1846. The data from which this list is complied enable the writer to estimate with confidence the number and amount drawn otherwise; and he calculates that the entire number, for not quite one year, of such Bills, is 24,000, and the amount £125,000, or, on an average, £5 4s. 2d. each. They are sent from husband to wife, from father to child, from child to father, mother, and grand-parents, from sister to brother, and the reverse; and from and to those united by all the ties of blood and friendship that bind us together on earth.

In the list, you will observe that these offerings of affection are classed according to the parts of Ireland they are drawn upon, and you will find that they are not confined to one spot of it, but are general as regards the whole country."—*Ireland, its Present Condition and Future Prospects. In a letter addressed to the Right Honorable Sir Robert Peel, Baronet, by Robert Murray, Esq. Dublin: James M'Glashan, 21 D'Olier street*, 1847.

motives at once so strong and painful, were not capable of resisting the contagion of emigration which, under the circumstances we have detailed, was so rife among the people. It was, however, on their part a distressing and mournful resolve. From the moment it was made, a gloom settled upon the whole family. Nothing a few months before had been farther from their thoughts; but now there existed such a combination of arguments for their departure, as influenced Bryan and his father, in spite of their hereditary attachment to Ahadarra and Carriglass. Between them and the Cavanaghs, ever since Gerald had delivered Kathleen's message to Bryan, there was scarcely any intercourse. Hanna, 'tis true, and Dora had an opportunity of exchanging a few words occasionally, but although the former felt much anxiety for a somewhat lengthened and if possible confidential conversation with her sparkling little friend, yet the latter kept proudly if not haughtily silent on one particular subject, feeling as she did, that anything like a concession on her part was humiliating, and might be misconstrued into a disposition to compromise the independence of her brother and family. But even poor Dora, notwithstanding her affectionate heart and high spirit, had her own sorrows to contend with, sorrows known only to her brother Bryan, who felt disposed to befriend her in them as far as he could. So indeed would every one of the family, had they known them, for we need scarcely say that the warm and generous girl was the centre in which all their affections met. And this indeed was only justice to her, inasmuch as she was willing on any occasion to sacrifice her interests, her wishes, or anything connected with her own welfare, to their individual or general happiness. We have said, however, that she had her own sorrows, and this was true. From the moment she felt assured that their emigration to America was certain, she manifested a depression so profound and melancholy, that the heart of her brother Bryan, who alone knew its cause, bled for her. This by the rest of the family was imputed to the natural regret she felt, in common with themselves, at leaving the old places for ever, with this difference to be sure—they imagined that she felt the separation more acutely than they did. Still, as the period for their departure approached, there was not one of the family, notwithstanding what she felt herself, who labored so incessantly to soothe and sustain the spirits of her father, who was fast sinking under the prospect of being "forever removed," as he said, "from the places his heart had grown into." She was in fact the general consoler of the family, and yet her eye scarcely ever met that of her brother that a tear did not tremble in it, and she felt disposed to burst out into an agony of unrestrained grief.

It was one evening in the week previous to their departure, that she was on her return from Ballymacan, when on passing a bend of the road between Carriglass and Fenton's farm, she met the cause of the sorrow which oppressed her, in the handsome person of James Cavanagh, to whom she had been for more than a year and a half deeply and devotedly attached, but without the knowledge of any individual living, save her lover himself and her brother Bryan.

On seeing him she naturally started, but it was a start of pleasure, and she felt her cheek flush and again get pale, and her heart palpitated, then was still a moment, and again resumed its tumultuous pulsations.

"Blessed be God, my darlin' Dora, that I've met you at last," said James; "in heaven's name how did it happen that we haven't met for such a length of time?"

"I'm sure that's more than I can tell," replied Dora, "or rather it's what both you and I know the cause of too well."

"Ah, poor Dora," he exclaimed, "for your sake I don't wish to spake about it at all; it left me many a sore heart when I thought of you."

Dora's natural pale cheek mantled, and her eyes deepened with a beautiful severity, as she hastily turned them on him and said, "what do you mane, James?"

"About poor Bryan's conduct at the election," he replied, "and that fifty-pound note; and may hell consume it and him that tempted him with it!"

"Do you forget," she said, "that you're spaking to his sister that knows the falsehood of it all; an' how dare you in my presence attempt to say or think that Bryan M'Mahon would or could do a mane or dishonest act? I'm afeard, James, there's a kind of low suspicion in your family that's not right, and I have my reasons for thinking so. I fear there's a want of true generosity among you; and if I could be sure of it, I tell you now, that whatever it might cost me, I'd never—but what am I sayin'? that's past."

"Past! oh, why do you spake that way, Dora dear?"

"It's no matter what I may suffer myself," she replied; "no matter at all about that; but wanst and for all, I tell you that let what may happen, I'm not the girl to go into a family that have treated my dear brother as yours has done. Your sister's

conduct has been very harsh and cruel to the man she was to be married to."

"My sister, Dora, never did anything but what was right."

"Well, then, let her go and marry the Pope, with reverence be it spoken, for I don't know any other husband that's fit for her. I'd like to see the girl that never did anything wrong; it's a sight I never saw yet, I know."

"Dora, dear," replied her lover, "I don't blame you for being angry. I know that such a load of disgrace upon any family is enough to put one past their temper. *I* don't care about that, however," he proceeded; "if he had betrayed his church and his country ten times over, an' got five hundred pounds instead of fifty, it wouldn't prevent me from makin' you my wife."

Her eyes almost emitted fire at this unconsciously offensive language of Cavanagh. She calmed herself, however, and assumed a manner that was cool and cuttingly ironical.

"Wouldn't you, indeed?" she replied; "dear me! I have a right to be proud of that; and so you'd be mane enough to marry into a family blackened by disgrace. I thought you had some decent pride, James."

"But *you* have done nothing wrong, Dora," he replied; "you're free from any blame of that kind."

"I have done nothing wrong, haven't I?" she returned. "Ay, a thousand things—for, thank God, I'm not infallible like your sister. Haven't I supported my brother in every thing he did? and I tell you that if I had been in his place I'd just 'a' done what he did. What do you think o' me now?"

"Why, that every word you say, and every lively look—ay, or angry if you like—that you give—makes me love you more and more. An' plase God, my dear Dora, I hope soon to see you my own darlin' wife."

"That's by no means a certain affair, James; an' don't rely upon it. Before ever I become your wife Kathleen must change her conduct to my brother."

"'Deed and I'm afraid *that* she'll never do, Dora."

"Then the sorra ring ever I'll put on you while there's breath in my body."

"Why, didn't she give him three months to clear himself?"

"Did she, indeed? And do you think that any young man of spirit would pay attention to such a stilted pride as that? It was her business to send for him face to face, and to say—'Bryan M'Mahon, I never knew you or one of your family to tell a lie or do a dishonest or disgraceful act'—and here as she spoke the tears of that ancient integrity and hereditary pride which are more precious relics in a family than the costliest jewels that ever sparkled in the sun, sprang from her eyes—'and now, Bryan M'Mahon, I ax no man's word but your own—I ax no other evidence but your own—I put it to your conscience—to that honor that has never yet been tarnished by any of your family, I say I put it to yourself, here face to face with the girl that loves you—and answer me as you are in the presence of God—did you do what they charge you with? Did you do wrong knowingly and deliberately, and against your own conscience?'"

The animated sparkle of her face was so delightful and fascinating that her lover attempted to press her to his bosom; but she would not suffer it.

"Behave now," she said firmly; "sorra bit—no," she proceeded; "and whilst all the world was against him, runnin' him down and blackenin' him—was she ever the girl to stand up behind his back and defend him like a—hem—defend him, I say, as a girl that loved him ought, and a generous girl would?"

"But how could she when she believed him to be wrong?"

"*Why* did she believe him to be wrong upon mere hearsay? and granting that he *was* wrong! do you think now if you had done what they say he did (and they lie that say it), an' that I heard the world down on you for your first slip, do you think, I say, that I'd not defend you out of clane contrariness,—and to vex them—ay, would I."

"I know, darlin', that you'd do everything that's generous an' right; but settin' that affair aside, my dear Dora, what are you and I to do?"

"I don't know what we're to do," she replied; "it's useless for you to ax me from my father now; for he wouldn't give me to you,—sorra bit."

"But you'll give me yourself, Dora, darling."

"Not without his consent, no nor with it,—as the families stand this moment; for I tell you again that the sorra ring ever I'll put on you till your sister sends for my brother, axes his pardon, and makes up with him, as she ought to do. Oh why, James dear, should she be so harsh upon him," she said, softening at once; "she that *is* so good an' so faultless afther all? but I suppose that's the raison of it—she doesn't know what it is to do anything that's not right."

"Dora," said her lover, "don't be harsh on Kathleen; you don't know what she's sufferin'. Dora, her heart's broke—broke."

The tears were already upon Dora's cheeks, and her lover, too, was silent for a moment.

"She has," resumed the warm-hearted

"I MUST LEAVE YOU—I MUST GO."—*Emigrants of Ahadarra.*

girl, "neither brother nor sister that loves her, or can love her, better than I do, afther all."

"But in our case, darling, what's to be done?" he asked, drawing her gently towards him.

"I'll tell you then what I'd recommend you to do," she replied; "spake to my brother Bryan, and be guided by him. I must go now, it's quite dusk."

There was a moment's pause, then a gentle remonstrance on the part of Dora, followed, however, by that soft sound which proceeds from the pressure of youthful lips —after which she bade her lover a hasty good-night and hurried home.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Old Places—Death of a Patriarch.

As the day appointed for the auction of the M'Mahon's stock, furniture, etc., etc., at Carriglass drew near, a spirit of deep and unceasing distress settled upon the whole family. It had not been their purpose to apprise the old man of any intention on their part to emigrate at all, and neither indeed had they done so. The fact, however, reached him from the neighbors, several of whom, ignorant that it was the wish of his family to conceal the circumstance from him—at least as long as they could—entered into conversation with him upon it, and by this means he became acquainted with their determination. Age, within the last few months—for he was now past ninety—had made sad work with both his frame and intellect. Indeed, for some time past, he might be said to hover between reason and dotage. Decrepitude had set in with such ravages on his constitution that it could almost be marked by daily stages. Sometimes he talked with singular good sense and feeling; but on other occasions he either babbled quite heedlessly, or his intellect would wander back to scenes and incidents of earlier life, many of which he detailed with a pathos that was created and made touching by the unconsciousness of his own state while relating them. They also observed that of late he began to manifest a child-like cunning in many things connected with himself and family, which, though amusing from its very simplicity, afforded at the same time a certain indication that the good old grandfather whom they all loved so well, and whose benignant character had been only mellowed by age into a more plastic affection for them all, was soon to be removed from before their eyes, never again to diffuse among them that charm of domestic truth and love, and the holy influences of all those fine old virtues which ancestral integrity sheds over the heart, and transmits pure and untarnished from generation to generation.

On the day he made the discovery of their intention, he had been sitting on a bench in the garden, a favorite seat of his for many a long year previously; "And so," said he to the neighbor with whom he had been speaking, "you tell me that all our family is goin' to America?"

"Why, dear me," replied his acquaintance, "is it possible you didn't know it?"

"Ha!" he exclaimed, "I undherstand now why they used to be whisperin' together so often, and lookin' at me; but indeed they might spake loud enough now, for I'm so deaf that I can hardly hear anything. Howaniver, Ned, listen—they all intend to go, you say; now listen, I say—I know one that won't go; now, do you hear that? You needn't say anything about it, but this I tell you—listen to me, what's your name? Barney, is it?"

"Why, is it possible, you don't know Ned Gormley?"

"Ay, Ned Gormley—och, so it is. Well listen, Ned—there's one they won't bring; I can tell you that—the sorra foot I'll go to—to—where's this you say they're goin' to, Jemmy?"

Gormley shook his head. "Poor Bryan," said he, "it's nearly all over wid you, at any rate. To America, Bryan," he repeated, in a loud voice.

"Ay, to America. Well, the sorra foot ever I'll go to America—that one thing I can tell them. I'm goin' in. Oh! never mind," he exclaimed, on Gormley offering him assistance, "I'm stout enough still; stout an' active still; as soople as a two-year ould, thank God. Don't I bear up wonderfully?"

"Well, indeed you do, Bryan; it *is* wonderful, sure enough."

In a few minutes they arrived at the door; and the old man, recovering as it were a portion of his former intellect, said, "lavin' this place—these houses—an' goin' away—far, far away—to a strange country—to strange people! an' to bring me, the ould white-haired grandfather, away from all! that would be cruel; but my son Tom will never do it."

"Well, at any rate, Bryan," said his neighbor, "whether you go or stay, God be wid you. It's a pity, God knows, that the like of you and your family should leave the country; and sure if the landlord, as they say, is angry about it, why doesn't he do

what he ought to do? an' why does he allow that smooth-tongued rap to lead him by the nose as he does? Howandiver, as I said, whether you go or stay, Bryan, God be wid you!"

During all that morning Thomas M'Mahon had been evidently suffering very deeply from a contemplation of the change that was about to take place by the departure of himself and his family from Carriglass. He had been silent the greater part of the morning, and not unfrequently forced to give away to tears, in which he was joined by his daughters, with the exception of Dora, who, having assumed the office of comforter, felt herself bound to maintain the appearance of a firmness which she did not feel. In this mood he was when "grandfather," as they called him, entered the house, after having been made acquainted with their secret. "Tom," said he, approaching his son, "sure you wouldn't go to bring an ould man away?"

"Where to, father?" asked the other, a good deal alarmed.

"Why, to America, where you're all goin' to. Oh! surely you wouldn't bring the old man away from the green fields of Carriglass? Would you lay my white head in a strange land, an' among a strange people? Would you take poor ould grandfather away from them that expects him down, at Carndhu where they sleep? Carndhu's a holy churchyard. Sure there never was a Protestant buried in it but one, an' the next mornin' there was a boortree bush growin' out o' the grave, an' it's there yet to prove the maricle. Oh! ay, Carndhu's holy ground, an' that's where *I* must sleep."

These words were uttered with a tone of such earnest and childlike entreaty as rendered them affecting in a most extraordinary degree, and doubly so to those who heard him. Thomas's eyes, despite of every effort to the contrary, filled with tears. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "he has found it out at last; but how can I give him consolation, an' I stands in need of it so much myself?"

"Father," said he, rising and placing the old man in the arm-chair, which for the last half century had been his accustomed seat, "father, we will go together—we will all be wid you. You'll not be among strangers—you'll have your own about you still."

"But what's takin' you all away?"

"Neglect and injustice, an' the evil tongues of them that ought to know us betther. The landlord didn't turn out to be what he ought to be. May God forgive him! But at any rate I'm sure he has been misled."

"Ould Chevydale," said his father, "never was a bad landlord, an' he'd not become a bad one now. That's not it."

"But the ould man's dead, father, an' its his son we're spakin' of."

"And the son of ould Chevydale must have *something* good about him. The heart was always right wid his father, and every one knows there's a great deal in true blood. Sooner or later it'll tell for itself—but what is this? There was something troublin' me this minute. Oh! ay, you're goin' away, then, to America; but, mark my words:—I won't go. *You* may, but *I'll* stay here. I won't lave the green fields of Carriglass for any one. It's not much I'll be among them now, an' it isn't worth your while to take me from them. Here's where I was born—here's where the limbs that's now stiff an' feeble was wanst young and active—here's where the hair that's white as snow was fair an' curlin' like goold—here's where I was young—here's where I grew ould—among these dark hills and green fields—here you all know is where I was born; and, in spite o' you all, here's where I'll die."

The old man was much moved by all these recollections; for, as he proceeded, the tears fell fast from his aged eyes, and his voice became tremulous and full of sorrow.

"Wasn't it here, too," he proceeded, "that Peggy Slevin, she that was famed far an' near for her beauty, and that the sweet song was made upon—'*Peggy Na Laveen*'—ay—ay, you may think yourselves fine an' handsome; but, where was there sich a couple as grandfather and *Peggy Na Laveen* was then?"

As he uttered these words, his features that had been impressed by grief, were lit up by a smile of that simple and harmless vanity which often attends us to the very grave; after which he proceeded:—

"There, on the side of that hill is the roofless house where she was born; an' there's not a field or hill about the place that her feet didn't make holy to me. I remember her well. I see her, an' I think I hear her voice on the top of Lisbane, ringin' sweetly across the valley of the Mountain Wather, as I often did. An' is it to take me away now from all this? Oh! no, childre', the white-haired grandfather couldn't go. He couldn't lave the ould places—the ould places. If he did, he'd die—he'd die. Oh, don't, for God's sake, Tom, as you love me!"

There was a spirit of helpless entreaty in these last words that touched his son, and indeed all who heard him, to the quick.

"Grandfather dear, be quiet," he replied; "God will direct all things for the best. Don't cry," he added, for the old man was crying like an infant; "don't cry, but be quiet, and everything will be well in time. It's a great trial, I know; but any change is

better than to remain here till we come, like so many others, to beggary. God will support us, father."

The old man wiped his eyes, and seemed as if he had taken comfort from the words of his son; whereas, the fact was, that his mind had altogether passed from the subject; but not without that unconscious feeling of pain which frequently remains after the recollection of that which has occasioned it has passed away.

It was evident, from the manner of the old man, that the knowledge of their intended emigration had alarmed into action all the dormant instincts of his nature; but this was clearly more than they were competent to sustain for any length of time. Neither the tottering frame, nor the feeble mind was strong enough to meet the shock which came so unexpectedly upon them. The consequence may be easily anticipated. On the following day he was able to be up only for an hour; yet he was not sick, nor did he complain of any particular pain. His only malady appeared to consist in that last and general prostration of bodily and intellectual strength, by which persons of extreme old age, who have enjoyed uninterrupted health, are affected at, or immediately preceding their dissolution. His mind, however, though wandering and unsteady, was vigorous in such manifestations as it made. For instance, it seemed to be impressed by a two-fold influence,—the memory of his early life, —mingled with a vague perception of present anxiety, the cause of which he occasionally was able to remember, but as often tried to recollect in vain.

On the second day after his discovery he was unable to rise at all; but, as before, he complained of nothing, neither were his spirits depressed. On the contrary they were rather agitated—sometimes into cheerfulness, but more frequently into an expression of sorrow and lamentation, which were, however, blended with old by-gone memories that were peculiarly reflecting to those who heard them. In this way he went on, sinking gradually until the day previous to the auction. On that morning, to their surprise, he appeared to have absolutely regained new strength, and to have been gifted with something like renovated power of speech.

"I want to get up," said he, "and it's only Tom an' Dora that I'll allow to help me. You're all good, an' wor always good to grandfather, but Tom was my best son, and signs on it—everything thruv wid him, an' God will prosper an' bless him. Where's Dora?"

"Here, grandfather."

"Ay, that's the voice above all o' them that went like music to my heart; but well I know, and always did, who you have that voice from; ay, an' I know whose eyes—an' it's them that's the lovely eyes—Dora has. Isn't the day fine, Dora?"

"It is, grandfather, a beautiful day."

"Ay, thank God. Well then I want to go out till I look—take one look at the ould places; for somehow I think my heart was never so much *in* them as now."

It is impossible to say how or why the feeling prevailed, but the fact was, that the whole family were impressed with a conviction that this partial and sudden restoration of his powers was merely what is termed the lightening before death, and the consequence was, that every word he spoke occasioned their grief, for the loss of the venerable and virtuous patriarch, to break out with greater force. When he was dressed he called Dora to aid her father in bringing him out, which she did with streaming eyes and sobbings that she could scarcely restrain. After having reached a little green eminence that commanded a glorious view of the rich country beneath and around them, he called for his chair; "an', Bryan," said he, "the manly and honest-hearted, do you bring it to me. A blessin' will follow you, Bryan—a blessin' will follow my manly grandson, that I often had a proud heart out of. An', Bryan," he proceeded, when the latter had returned with the chair and placed him in it, "listen, Bryan—when you and Kathleen Cavanagh's married—but I needn't say it—where was there one of your name to do an unmanly thing in that respect?—but when you and Kathleen's married, be to her as your own father was to her that's gone—ever and always kind and lovin', an' what your grandfather that's now spaking to you, maybe for the last time, was to her that's long, long an angel in heaven—my own Peggy Slevin—but it's the Irish sound of it I like—*Peggy Na Laveen*. Bring them all out here—but what is this?—why are you all cryin'? Sure there's nothing wrong—an' why do you cry?"

The other members of the family then assembled with tearful faces, and the good old man proceeded:—

"Thomas M'Mahon, stand before me." The latter, with uncovered head, did so; and his father resumed:—"Thomas M'Mahon, you're the only livin' son I have, an' I'm now makin' my Will. I lave this farm of Carriglass to you, while you live, wid all that's on it and in it—that is, that I have any right to lave you—I lave it to you wid my blessin', and may God grant you long life and health to enjoy it. Ahadarra isn't mine to give, but, Bryan, it's your's; an' as I said to your

father, God grant you health and long life to enjoy it, as he will to both o' you."

"Oh! little you know, grandfather dear," replied Shibby, "that we've done wid both of them for ever."

"Shibby, God bless you, achora," he returned; "but the ould man's lips can spake nothing now but the truth; an' my blessin' an' my wish, comin' from the Almighty as they do, won't pass away like common words." He then paused for a few minutes, but appeared to take a comprehensive view of the surrounding country.

"But, grandfather," proceeded simple-hearted Shibby, "sure the match between Bryan and Kathleen Cavanagh is broken up, an' they're not to be married at all."

"Don't I say, darlin', that they *will* be married, an' be happy—ay, an' may God make them happy! as He will, blessed be His holy name! God, acushla, can bring about everything in His own good way."

After another pause of some minutes he murmured to himself—"Peggy Na Laveen—Peggy Na Laveen—how far that name has gone! Turn me round a little. What brought us here, childre'? Oh! ay—I wanted to see the ould places—there's Claghleim, where the walls of the house she was born in, and the green garden, is both to the fore; yet I hope they won't be disturbed, if it was only for the sake of them that's gone; an' there's the rock on the top of Lisbane, where, in the summer evening, long, long ago, I used to sit an' listen to Peggy Na Laveen singin' over our holy songs—the darlin' ould songs of the counthry. Oh! clear an' sweet they used to ring across the glen of the Mountain Wather. An' there's the hills an' the fields where she an' I so often sported when we wor both young; there they are, an' many a happy day we had on them; but sure God was good to us, blessed be His name, as He ever will be to them that's obadient to His holy will!"

As he uttered the last words he clasped his two hands together, and, having closed his eyes, he muttered something internally which they could not understand. "Now," said he, "bring me in again; I have got my last look at them all—the ould places, the brave ould places! oh, who would lave them for any other country? But at any rate, Tom, achora, don't take *me* away from them; sure you wouldn't part me from the green fields of Carriglass? Sure you'd not take me from the blessed graveyard of Carndhu, where we all sleep. I couldn't rest in a sthrange grave, nor among strange people; I couldn't rest, barrin' I'm wid *her*, *Peggy Na Laveen*." These words he uttered after his return into the house.

"Grandfather," said Bryan, "make your mind aisy; we *won't* take you from the brave ould places, and you *will* sleep in Carndhu with *Peggy Na Laveen*; make your heart and mind easy, then, for you won't be parted."

He turned his eyes upon the speaker, and a gleam of exultation and delight settled upon his worn but venerable features; nor did it wholly pass away, for, although his chin sank upon his breast, yet the placid expression remained. On raising his head they perceived that this fine and patriarchal representative of the truthful integrity and simple manners of a bygone class had passed into a life where neither age nor care can oppress the spirit, and from whose enjoyment no fear of separation can ever disturb it.

It is unnecessary to describe the sorrow which they felt. It must be sufficient to say that seldom has grief for one so far advanced in years been so sincere and deep. Age, joined to the knowledge of his affectionate heart and many virtues, had encircled him with a halo of love and pious veneration which caused his disappearance from among them to be felt, as if a lamb of simple piety and unsullied truth had been removed from their path for ever.

That, indeed, was a busy and a melancholy day with the M'Mahons; for, in addition to the death of the old grandfather, they were obliged to receive farewell visits to no end from their relations, neighbors, and acquaintances. Indeed it would be difficult to find a family in a state of greater distress and sorrow. The auction, of course, was postponed for a week—that is, until after the old man's funeral—and the consequence was that circumstances, affecting the fate of our *dramatis personæ*, had time to be developed, which would otherwise have occurred too late to be available for the purposes of our narrative. This renders it necessary that we should return to a period in it somewhat anterior to that at which we have now arrived.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Containing a Variety of Matters.

Our readers cannot have forgotten the angry dialogue which Kate Hogan and her male relations indulged in upon the misunderstanding that had occurred between the Cavanaghs and M'Mahons, and its imputed cause. We stated at the time that Hycy Burke and the Hogans, together with a strange man and woman, were embarked in some mysterious proceedings from which both Kate Hogan and Teddy Phats had been

excluded. For some time, both before and after that night, there had been, on the other hand, a good deal of mysterious communication between several of our other characters. For instance Kate Hogan and Nanny Peety had had frequent interviews, to which, in the course of time, old Peety, Teddy Phats, and, after him, our friend the schoolmaster had been admitted. Nanny Peety had also called on Father Magowan, and, after him, upon young Clinton; and it was evident, from the result of her disclosures to the two latter, that they also took a warm interest, and were admitted to a participation in, the councils we mention. To these proceedings Clinton had not been long privy when he began to communicate with Vanston, who, on his part, extended the mystery to Chevydale, between whom and himself several confidential interviews had already taken place. Having thrown out these hints to our readers, we beg them to accompany us once more to the parlor of Clinton the gauger and his nephew.

"So, uncle, now that you have been promoted to the Supervisorship, you abandon the farm; you abandon Ahadarra?"

"Why, won't I be out of the district, you blockhead? and you persist in refusing it besides."

"Most positively; but I always suspected that Fethertonge was a scoundrel, as his conduct in that very business with you was a proo—hem, ahem."

"Go on," said the uncle, coolly, "don't be ashamed, Harry; I was nearly as great a scoundrel in that business as he was. I told you before that I look upon the world as one great pigeon, which every man who can, without exposing himself, is obliged to pluck. Now, in the matter of the farm, I only was about to pluck out a feather or two to put in my own nest—or yours, if you had stood it."

"At any rate, uncle, I must admit that you are exceedingly candid."

"No such thing, you fool; there is scarcely an atom of candor in my whole composition—I mean to the world, whatever I may be to you. Candor, Harry, my boy, is a virtue which very few in this life, as it goes, can afford to practice—at least I never could."

"Well but, uncle, is it not a pity to see that honest family ruined and driven out of the country by the villany of Burke on the one hand, and the deliberate fraud and corruption of Fethertonge, on the other. However, now that you are resolved to unmask Fethertonge, I am satisfied. It's a proof that you don't wish to see an honest family oppressed and turned, without reasonable compensation, out of their property."

"It's a proof of no such thing, I tell you. I don't care the devil had the M'Mahons; but I am bound to this ninnyhammer of a landlord, who has got me promoted, and who promises, besides, to get an appointment for you. I cannot see him, I say, fleeced and plucked by this knavish agent, who winds him about his finger like a thread; and, as to those poor honest devils of M'Mahons, stop just a moment and I will show you a document that may be of some value to them. You see, Fethertonge, in order to enhance the value of his generosity to myself, or, to come nearer the truth, the value of Ahadarra, was the means of placing a document, which I will immediately show you, in my hands."

He went to his office or study, and, after some search, returned and handed the other a written promise of the leases of Ahadarra and Carriglass, respectively, to Thomas M'Mahon and his son Bryan, at a certain reasonable rent offered by each for their separate holdings.

"Now," he proceeded, "there's a document which proves Fethertonge, notwithstanding his knavery, to be an ass; otherwise he would have reduced it to ashes long ago; and, perhaps, after having turned it to his account, he would have done so, were it not that I secured it. Old Chevydale, it appears, not satisfied with giving his bare word, strove, the day before he died, to reduce his promise about the lease to writing, which he did, and entrusted it to the agent for the M'Mahons, to whom, of course, it was never given."

"But what claim had you to it, uncle?"

"Simply, if he and I should ever come to a misunderstanding, that I might let him know he was in my power, by exposing his straightforward methods of business; that's all. However, about the web that this fellow Burke has thrown around these unfortunate devils the M'Mahons, and those other mighty matters that you told of, let me hear exactly what it is all about and how they stand. You say there is likely to be hanging or transportation among them."

"Why, the circumstances, sir, are these, as nearly as I am in possession of them:—There is or was, at least a day or two ago, a very pretty girl—"

"Ay, ay—no fear but there must be that in it; go along."

"A very pretty girl, named Nanny Peety, a servant in old Jemmy Burke's, Hycy's father. It appears that his virtuous son Hycy tried all the various stratagems of which he is master to debauch the morals of this girl, but without success. Her virtue was incorruptible."

"Ahem! get along, will you, and pass that over."

"Well, I know that's another of your crotchets, uncle: but no matter, I should be sorry, from respect to my mother's memory, to agree with you there: however to proceed; this Nanny Peety at length—that is about a week ago—was obliged to disclose to her father the endless persecution which she had to endure at the hands of Hycy Burke; and in addition to that disclosure, came another, to the effect that she had been for a considerable period aware of a robbery which took place in old Burke's—you may remember the stir it made—and which robbery was perpetrated by Bat Hogan, one of these infamous tinkers that live in Gerald Cavanagh's kiln, and under the protection of his family. The girl's father—who, by the way, is no other than the little black visaged mendicant who goes about the country—"

"I know him—proceed."

"Her father, I say, on hearing these circumstances, naturally indignant at Hycy Burke for his attempts to corrupt the principles of his daughter, brought the latter with him to Father Magowan, in whose presence she stated all she knew; adding, that she had secured Bat Hogan's hat and shoes, which, in his hurry, he had forgotten on the night of the robbery. She also requested the priest to call upon me, 'as she felt certain,' she said, 'in consequence of a letter of Burke's which I happened to see as she carried it to the post-office, that I could throw some light upon his villany. He did so.' It was on that affair the priest called here the other day, and I very candidly disclosed to him the history of that letter, and its effect in causing the seizure of the distillery apparatus—the fact being that everything was got up by Hycy himself—I mean at his cost, with a view to ruin M'Mahon. And this I did the more readily, as the scoundrel has gone far to involve me in the conduct imputed to M'Mahon, as his secret abbettor and enemy."

"Well," observed his uncle, "all that's a very pretty affair as it stands; but what are you to do next?"

"There is worse behind, I can assure you," continued his nephew. "Hycy Burke, who is proverbially extravagant, having at last, in an indirect way, ruined young M'Mahon, from the double motive of ill-will and a wish to raise money by running illicit spirits—"

"The d—d scoundrel!" exclaimed the gauger, seized with a virtuous fit of (professional) indignation, "that fellow would scruple at nothing—proceed."

"By the way," observed the other, rather maliciously, "he made a complete tool of you in M'Mahon's affair."

"He did, the scoundrel," replied his uncle, wincing a good deal; "but, as the matter was likely to turn up, he was only working out my purposes."

"He is in a bad mess now, however," continued his nephew.

"Why, is there worse to come?"

"This same Nanny Peety, you must know, is a relative, it seems, to Bat Hogan's wife. For some time past there has come a strange man named Vincent, and his wife, to reside in the neighborhood, and this fellow in conjunction with the Hogans, was managing some secret proceedings which no one can penetrate. Now, it appears that Hogan's wife, who has been kept out of this secret, got Nanny Peety to set her father to work in order to discover it. Peety, by the advice of Hogan's wife, called in Teddy Phat's—"

"What's that? Teddy Phats? Now, by the way, Harry, don't abuse poor Teddy. You will be surprised, Hal, when I tell you that he and I have played into each other's hands for years. Yes, my boy, and I can assure you that, owing to him, both Fethertonge and I were aware of Hycy's Burke's plot against M'Mahon long before he set it agoing. The fellow, however, will certainly be hanged yet."

"Faith, sir," replied Harry, "instead of being hanged himself, he's likely to hang others. In consequence of an accidental conversation which Teddy Phats, and Finigan the tippling schoolmaster had, concerning Vincent, the stranger I spoke of, who, it appears, lives next to Finigan's school-house, Teddy discovered, through the pedagogue, who, by the way, is abroad at all hours, that the aforesaid Vincent was in the habit of going up every night to the most solitary part of the mountains, but for what purpose, except upon another distillation affair, he could not say."

The old gauger or supervisor, as he now considered himself, became here so comically excited—or, we should rather say, so seriously excited—that it was with difficulty the nephew could restrain his laughter. He moved as if his veins had been filled with quicksilver, his eyes brightened, and his naturally keen and knavish-looking features were sharpened, as it were, into an expression so acutely sinister, that he resembled a staunch old hound who comes unexpectedly upon the fresh slot of a hare.

"Well," said he, rubbing his hands—"well, go on—what happened? Do you hear, Harry? What happened? Of course they're at the distillation again. Don't you hear me, I say? What was the upshot?"

"Why, the upshot was," replied the other, "that nothing of sufficient importance has

been discovered yet; but we have reason to suppose that they're engaged in the process of forgery or coining, as they were in that of illicit distillation under the patronage of the virtuous Hycy Burke, or Hycy the accomplished, as he calls himself."

"Tut, tut!" exclaimed Clinton, disappointed—"so after all, there has been nothing done?"

"Oh, yes, there has been something done; for instance, all these matters have been laid before Mr. Vanston, and he has had two or three interviews with Chevydale, in whose estimation he has exonerated young M'Mahon from the charge of bribery and ingratitude. Fethertonge holds such a position now with his employer that an infant's breath would almost blow him out of his good opinion."

"I'll tell you what, Harry, I think you have it in your power among you to punish these rogues; and I think, too, it's a pity that Fethertonge should escape. A breath will dislodge him, you say; but for fear it should not, we will give him a breeze."

"I am to meet Vanston at Chevydale's by-and-by, uncle. There's to be an investigation there; and by the way, allow me to bring Hycy's anonymous letter with me—it may serve an honest man and help to punish a rogue. What if you would come down with me, and *give* him the breeze?"

"Well," replied the uncle, "for the novelty of the thing I don't care if I do. *I like, after all, to see a rogue punished, especially when he is not prepared for it.*"

After a little delay they repaired to Chevydale's house, armed with Hycy's anonymous letter to Clinton, as well as with the document which the old squire, as he was called, had left for Thomas M'Mahon and his son. They found the two gentlemen on much better terms than one would have expected; but, in reality, the state of the country was such as forced them to open their eyes not merely to the folly of harboring mere political resentments or senseless party prejudices against each other, but to the absolute necessity that existed for looking closely into the state of their property, and the deplorable condition to which, if they did not take judicious and decisive steps, it must eventually be reduced. They now began to discover a fact which they ought, long since, to have known—viz.:—that the condition of the people and that of their property was one and the same—perfectly identical in all things; and that a poor tenantry never yet existed upon a thriving or independent estate, or one that was beneficial to the landlord.

Vanston had been with his late opponent for some time before the arrival of Clinton and his nephew; and, as their conversation may not, perhaps, be without some interest to our readers, we shall detail a portion of it.

"So," says Vanston, "you are beginning to feel that there is something wrong on your property, and that your agent is not doing you justice?"

"I have reason to suspect," replied Chevydale, "that he is neither more nor less than feathering his own nest at the expense of myself and my tenantry. I cannot understand why he is so anxious to get the M'Mahons off the estate; a family unquestionably of great honesty, truth, and integrity, and who, I believe, have been on the property before it came into our possession at all. I feel—excuse me, Vanston, for the admission, but upon my honor it is truth—I feel, I say, that, in the matter of the election—that is, so far as M'Mahon was concerned, he—my agent—made a cat's paw of me. He prevented me from supporting young M'Mahon's memorial; he—he—prejudiced me against the family in several ways, and now, that I am acquainted with the circumstances of strong and just indignation against me under which M'Mahon voted, I can't at all blame him. I would have done the same thing myself."

"There is d——d villany somewhere at work," replied Vanston. "They talk of a fifty-pound note that I am said to have sent to him by post. Now, I pledge my honor as an honest man and a gentleman, that I have sifted and examined all my agents, and am satisfied that he never received a penny from me. Young Burke did certainly promise to secure me his vote; but I have discovered Burke to be a most unprincipled profligate, corrupt and dishonest. For, you may think it strange that, although he engaged to procure me M'Mahon's vote, M'Mahon himself, whom I believe, assured me that he never even asked him for it, until after he had overheard, in the head inn, a conversation concerning himself that filled him with bitter resentment against you and your agent."

"I remember it," replied Chevydale, "and yet my agents told me that Burke did everything in his power to prevent M'Mahon from voting for you."

"That," replied the other, "was to preserve his own character from the charge of inconsistency; for, I again assure you that he had promised us M'Mahon's vote, and that he urged him privately to vote against you. But d——n the scoundrel, he is not worth the conversation we had about him. Father Magowan, in consequence of whose note to me I wrote to ask you here, states in

the communication I had from him, that the parties will be here about twelve o'clock—Burke himself, he thinks, and M'Mahon along with the rest. The priest wishes to have these Hogans driven out of the parish—a wish in which I most cordially join him. I hope we shall soon rid the country of him and his villanous associates. Talking of the country, what is to be done?"

"Simply," replied Chevydale, "that we, the landed proprietors of Ireland, should awake out of our slumbers, and forgetting those vile causes of division and subdivision that have hitherto not only disunited us, but set us together by the ears, we should take counsel among ourselves, and after due and serious deliberation, come to the determination that it is our duty to prevent Irish interests from being made subservient to English interests, and from being legislated for upon English principles."

"I hope, Chevydale, you are not about to become a Repealer."

"No, sir; I am, and ever have been sickened by that great imposture. Another half century would scarcely make us fit for home legislation. When we look at the conduct of our Irish members in the British Parliament—I allude now, with few exceptions, to the Repeal members—what hope can we entertain of honesty and love of country from such men? When we look, too, at many of our Corporations and strike an average of their honesty and intellect, have we not a right to thank God that the interests of our country are not confided to the management of such an arrogant, corrupt, and vulgar crew as in general compose them. The truth is, Vanston, we must become national in our own defense, and whilst we repudiate, with a firm conviction of the folly on the one hand, and the dishonesty on the other, of those who talk about Repeal, we shall find it our best policy to forget the interests of any particular class, and suffer ourselves to melt down into one great principle of national love and good-will toward each other. Let us only become unanimous, and England will respect us as she did when we were unanimous upon other occasions."

"I feel, and am perfectly sensible of the truth of what you say," replied Vanston, "and I am certain that, in mere self-defence, we must identify ourselves with the people whose interests most unquestionably are ours."

"As to myself," continued Chevydale, "I fear I have much to repair in my conduct as an Irish landlord. I have been too confiding and easy—in fact, I have not thought for myself; but been merely good or evil, according to the caprice of the man who managed me, and whom, up until now, I did not suspect."

"The man, my good friend, is probably not worse in general than others," replied Vanston; "but the truth is, that there has been such a laxity of management in Irish property—such indifference and neglect upon our part, and such gross ignorance of our duties, that agents were, and in most cases are, at liberty to act as they please in our names, and under show of our authority; you can scarcely suppose this man, consequently, much worse than others who are placed in similar circumstances."

The dialogue was here interrupted by the entrance of old Clinton and his nephew; but, as our readers are already in possession of the proofs they brought against Hycy Burke and Fethertonge, it is not necessary that we should detail there conversation at full length.

"I must confess," said Clinton, "that I would have some reason to feel ashamed of my part in the transactions with respect to Ahadarra, were it not, in the first place, that I have never been much afflicted with the commodity; and, in the next, that these transactions are too common to excite any feeling one way or the other."

"But you must have known, Clinton," said Chevydale, "that it was a most iniquitous thing in you to enter into a corrupt bargain with a dishonest agent for the property which you knew to belong to another man."

"What other man, Mr. Chevydale? Had not M'Mahon's lease expired?"

"But had you not in your own possession my father's written promise—written, too, on his death-bed—to these honest men, that they should have their leases renewed?"

"Yes, but that was your agent's affair, and his dishonesty, too, not mine."

"As much yours as his; and, by the way, I don't see upon what principle you, who are equally involved with him in the profligacy of the transaction, should come to bear testimony against him now. They say there is honor among thieves, but I see very little of it here."

"Faith, to tell you the truth," replied Clinton, "as I said to Harry here, *because I like to see a rogue punished, especially when he is not prepared for it.*"

"Well," said Chevydale, with a very solemn ironical smile, "I am myself very much of your way of thinking; and, as a proof of it, I beg to say that, as your appointment to the office of Supervisor has not yet been made out, I shall write to my brother, the Commissioner, to take care that it never shall. To procure the promotion of a man

who can deliberately avow his participation in such shameless profligacy would be to identify myself with it. You have been doubly treacherous, Mr. Clinton; first to me, whom you know to be your friend, and, in the next place, to the unfortunate partner in your villany, and at my expense; for d——e if I can call it less. What noise is that?"

Clinton the elder here withdrew, and had scarcely disappeared when two voices were heard in the hall, in a kind of clamorous remonstrance with each other, which voices were those of Father Magowan and our friend O'Finigan, as we must now call him, inasmuch as he is, although early in the day, expanded with that hereditary sense of dignity which will not allow the great O to be suppressed.

"Behave, and keep quiet, now," said his Reverence, "you unfortunate pedagogue you; I tell you that you are inebriated."

"Pardon me, your Reverence," replied O'Finigan; "*non ebrius sed vino gravatus*, devil a thing more."

"Get out, you profligate," replied the priest, "don't you know that either, at this time o' day, is too bad?"

"*Nego, dominie—nego, Dominie revendre*—denial is my principle, I say. Do you assert that there's no difference between *ebrius* and *gravatus vino?*"

"In your case, you reprobate, I do. Where would you get the *vino?* However," he proceeded, "as you are seldom sober, and as I know it is possible you may have something of importance to say on a particular subject, I suppose you may as well say it now as any other time, and it's likely we may get more truth out of you."

"Ay," said the schoolmaster, "upon the principle that *in vino veritas;* but you know that *gravatus vino* and *ebrius* are two different things—*gravatus vino*, the juice o' the grape—och, och, as every one knows, could and stupid; but *ebrius* from blessed poteen, that warms and gives ecstatic nutrition to the heart."

The altercation proceeded for a little, but, after a short remonstrance and bustle, the priest, followed by O'Finigan, entered the room.

"Gentlemen," said the priest, "I trust you will excuse me for the society in which I happen to appear before you; but the truth is that this Finigan—"

"Pardon me, your Reverence, O'Finigan if you plaise; we have been shorn of—"

"Well, then, since he will have it so, this O'Finigan is really inebriated, and I cannot exactly say why, in this state, his presence can be of any advantage to us."

"He says," replied the master, "that I am *ebrius*, whereas I replied that I was only *vino gravatus*, by which I only meant *quasi vino gravatus;* but the truth is, gentlemen, that I'm never properly sober until I'm half seas over—for it is then that I have all my wits properly about me."

"In fact, gentleman," proceeded the priest, "in consequence of certain disclosures that have reached me with reference to these Hogans, I deemed it my duty to bring Nanny Peety before Mr. Chevydale here. She is accompanied by Kate Hogan, the wife of one of these ruffians, who refuses to be separated from her—and insists, consequently, on coming along with her. I don't exactly know what her motive may be in this; but I am certain she *has* a motive. It is a gratification to me, however, to find, gentlemen, that you both happen to be present upon this occasion. I sent word to Hycy Burke and to Bryan M'Mahon; for I thought it only fair that Hycy should be present, in order to clear himself in case any charge may be brought against *him*. I expect M'Mahon, too."

"Let us remove, then, to my office," said Chevydale—"it is now a few minutes past twelve, and I dare say they will soon be here."

They accordingly did so; and, as he had said, the parties almost immediately made their appearance.

"Now, gentlemen," said Father Magowan, "I am of opinion that the best way is for this girl to state what she knows concerning these Hogans; but I think I can now persave the raison why Kate Hogan has made it a point to come with her. It is quite evident from her manner that she wishes to intimidate this girl, and to prevent her from stating fully and truly what she knows."

"No," replied Kate, "it is no such thing—she must either state the *whole* truth or nothing; that's what I want, an' what she *must* do—put the saddle on the right horse, Nanny—since you *will* spake."

"It is a good proverbial illustration," observed Finigan, "but I will improve it—put the saddle of infamy, I say, upon the right horse, Nanny. You see, gintlemen," he added, turning to the magistrates, "my improvement elevates the metaphor—proceed, *girsha*."

"Gentlemen," said Hycy, "I received a note from Father Magowan informing me that it was probable certain charges might be brought against me—or at least some complaints made," he added, softening the expression—"and I should be glad to know what they are all about, before this girl commences formally to state them; I say so in order that I may not be taken by surprise."

"You know," replied the priest, "that

you cannot be taken by surprise; because I myself told you the substance of the strong suspicions that are against you."

Bryan M'Mahon now entered, and was cordially greeted by Vanston—and we may add rather kindly, in manner at least, by Chevydale.

"By the way," asked the former of these gentlemen, "does this investigation bear in any way upon *your* interests, M'Mahon?"

"Not, sir, so far as I am aware of—I come here because Father Magowan wished me to come. I have no interests connected with this country now," he added in a tone of deep melancholy, "there's an end to that for ever."

"Now, my good girl," said Chevydale, "you will state all you know connected with these Hogans fully and truly—that is, neither more nor less than the truth."

"*All* the truth, Nanny," said Kate Hogan, in a voice of strongly condensed power; "Hycy Burke," she proceeded, "you ruined Bryan M'Mahon here—and, by ruinin' *him*, you broke Miss Kathleen Cavanagh's heart—she's gone—no docthor could save her now; and for this you'll soon know what Kate Hogan can do. Go on, Nanny."

"Well, gintlemen," Nanny began, "in the first place it was Mr. Hycy here that got the Still up in Ahadarra, in ordher to beggar Bryan M'Mahon by the fine."

Hycy laughed. "Excellent!" said he; "Why, really, Mr. Chevydale, I did not imagine that you could suffer such a farce as this is likely to turn out to be enacted exactly in your office."

"Enacted! well, that's appropriate at any rate," said the schoolmaster; "but in the mane time, Mr. Hycy, take care that the farce won't become a tragedy on your hands, and you yourself the hero of it. Proceed, *girsha.*"

"How do you know," asked Chevydale, "that this charge is true?"

"If I don't know it," she replied, "my aunt here does,—and I think so does Mr. Harry Clinton an' others."

"Pray, my woman, what do you know about this matter?" asked Chevydale, addressing Kate.

"Why that it was Mr. Hycy Burke that gave the Hogans the money to make the Still, set it up—and to Teddy Phats to buy barley; and although he didn't tell them it was to ruin Bryan M'Mahon he did it, sure they all knew it was—'spishly when he made them change from Glendearg above, where they were far safer, down to Ahadarra."

"I assure you, gentlemen," said Hycy, "that the respectability of the witnesses you have fished up is highly creditable to your judgments and sense of justice;—a common vagabond and notorious thief on the one hand, and a beggarman's brat on the other. However, proceed—I perceive that I shall be obliged to sink under the force of such testimony—ha! ha! ha!"

At this moment old Jemmy Burke, having accidentally heard that morning that such an investigation was to take place, and likely to bear upon the conduct of his eldest son, resolved to be present at it, and he accordingly presented himself as Hycy had concluded his observations.

The high integrity of his character was at once recognized—he was addressed in terms exceedingly respectful, if not deferential, by the two magistrates—Chevydale having at once ordered the servant in attendance to hand him a chair. He thanked him, however, but declined it gratefully, and stood like the rest.

In the meantime the investigation proceeded. "Mr. Burke," said Chevydale, addressing himself to the old man, whose features, by the way, were full of sorrow and distress—"it may be as well to state to you that we are not sitting now formally in our magisterial capacity, to investigate any charges that may be brought against your son, but simply making some preliminary inquiries with respect to other charges, which we have been given to understand are about to be brought against the notorious Hogans."

"Don't lay the blame upon the Hogans," replied Kate, fiercely—"the Hogans, bad as people say they are, only acted under Hycy Burke. It was Hycy Burke."

"But," said Chevydale, probably out of compassion for the old man, "you must know we are not now investigating Mr. Burke's conduct."

"Proceed, gintlemen," said his father, firmly but sorrowfully; "I have heard it said too often that he was at the bottom of the plot that ruined Bryan M'Mahon, or that wint near to ruin him; I wish to have that well sifted, gintlemen, and to know the truth."

"I can swear," continued Kate, "that it was him got up the whole plan, and gave them the money for it. I seen him in our house—or, to come nearer the truth, in Gerald Cavanagh's kiln, where we live—givin' them the money."

"As you are upon that subject, gentlemen," observed Harry Clinton, "I think it due to the character of Bryan M'Mahon to state that I am in a capacity to prove that Hycy Burke was unquestionably at the bottom—or, in point of fact, the originator—of his calamities with reference to the act of illicit distillation, and the fine which he

would have been called on to pay, were it not that the Commissioners of Excise remitted it."

"Thank you, Mr. Clinton," replied Hycy; "I find I am not mistaken in you—I think you are worthy of your accomplices"—and he pointed to Kate and Nanny as he spoke—"proceed."

"We are passing," observed Vanston, "from one to another rather irregularly, I fear; don't you think we had better hear this girl fully in the first place; but, my good girl," he added, "you are to understand that we are not here to investigate any charges against Mr. Hycy Burke, but against the Hogans. You will please then to confine your charges to them."

"But," replied Nanny, "that's what I can't do, plase your honor, widout bringin' in Hycy Burke too, bekaise himself an' the Hogans was joined in everything."

"I think, gintlemen," said the priest, "the best plan is to let her tell her story in her own way."

"Perhaps so," said Chevydale; "proceed, young woman, and state fully and truly whatever you have got to say."

"Well, then," she proceeded, "there's one thing I know—I know who robbed Mr. Burke here;" and she pointed to the old man, who started.

The magistrates also looked surprised. "How," said Vanston, turning his eyes keenly upon her, "you know of the robbery; and pray, how long have you known it?"

"Ever since the night it was committed, plaise your honor."

"What a probable story!" exclaimed Hycy; "and you kept it to yourself, like an honest girl as you are, until now!"

"Why, Mr. Burke," said Vanston, quickly and rather sharply, "surely you can have no motive in impugning her evidence upon *that* subject?"

Hycy bit his lip, for he instantly felt that he had overshot himself by almost anticipating the charge, as if it were about to be made against himself;—"What I think improbable in it," said Hycy, "is that she should, if in possession of the facts, keep them concealed so long."

"Oh, never fear, Mr. Hycy, I'll soon make that plain enough," she replied.

"But in the mean time," said Chevydale, "will you state the names of those who did commit the robbery?"

"I will," she replied.

"The whole truth, Nanny," exclaimed Kate.

"It was Bat Hogan, then, that robbed Mr. Burke," she replied; "and—and—"

"Out wid it," said Kate.

"And who besides, my good girl?" inquired Vanston.

The young woman looked round with compassion upon Jemmy Burke, and the tears started to her eyes. "I pity *him!*" she exclaimed, "I pity him—that good old man;" and, as she uttered the words, she wept aloud.

"This, I fear, is getting rather a serious affair," said Vanston, in a low voice to Chevydale—"I see how the tide is likely to turn."

Chevydale merely nodded, as if he also comprehended it. "You were about to add some other name?" said he; "in the mean time compose yourself and proceed."

Hycy Burke's face at this moment had become white as a sheet; in fact, to any one of common penetration, guilt and a dread of the coming disclosure were legible in every lineament of it.

"Who was the other person you were about to mention?" asked Vanston.

"His own son, sir, Mr. Hycy Burke, there."

"Ha!" exclaimed Chevydale; "Mr. Hycy Burke, do you say? Mr. Burke," he added, addressing that gentleman, "how is this? Here is a grave and serious charge against you. What have you to say to it?"

"That it would be both grave and serious," replied Hycy, "if it possessed but one simple element, without which all evidence is valueless—I mean *truth*. All I can say is, that she might just as well name either of yourselves, gentlemen, as me."

"How do you know that Hogan committed the robbery?" asked Hycy.

"Simply bekaise I seen him. He broke open the big chest above stairs."

"How did you see him?" asked Vanston.

"Through a hole in the partition," she replied, "where a knot of the deal boards had come out. I slep', plaise your honor, in a little closet off o' the room the money was in."

"Is it true that she slept there, Mr. Burke?" asked Vanston of the old man.

"It is thrue, sir, God help me; that at all events is thrue."

"Well, proceed," said Chevydale.

"I then threw my gown about my shoulders; but in risin' from my bed it creaked a little, an' Bat Hogan, who had jest let down the lid of the chest aisily when he hard the noise, blew out the bit of candle that he had in his hand, and picked his way down stairs as aisily as he could. I folleyed him on my tippytoes, an' when he came opposite the door of the room where the masther and misthress sleep, the door opened, an' the mistress wid a

candle in her hand met him full-but in the teeth. I was above upon the stairs at the time, but from the way an' the place she stood in, the light didn't rache me, so that I could see them widout bein' seen myself. Well, when the mistress met him she was goin' to bawl out wid terror, an' would, too, only that Masther Hycy flew to her, put his hand on her mouth, an' whispered something in her ear. He then went over to Bat, and got a large shafe of bank-notes from him, an' motioned him to be off wid himself, an' that he'd see him to-morrow. Bat went down in the dark, an' Hycy an' his mother had some conversation in a low voice on the lobby. She seemed angry, an' he was speakin' soft an' strivin' to put her into good humor again. I then slipt back to bed, but the never a wink could I get till mornin'; an' when I went down, the first thing I saw was Bat Hogan's shoes. It was hardly light at the time; but at any rate I hid them where they couldn't be got, an' it was well I did, for the first thing I saw was Bat himself peering about the street and yard, like a man that was looking for something that he had lost."

"But how did you know that the shoes were Hogan's?" asked Vanston.

"Why, your honor, any one that ever seen the man might know that. One of his heels is a trifle shorter than the other, which makes him halt a little, an' he has a bunion as big as an egg on the other foot."

"Ay, Nanny," said Kate, "that's the truth; but I can tell you more, gentlemen. On the evenin' before, when Mr. Hycy came home, he made up the plan to rob his father wid Phil Hogan; but Phil got drunk that night an' Bat had to go in his place. Mr. Hycy promised to see the Hogans that mornin' at his father's, about ten o'clock; but when they went he had gone off to Ballymacan; an' as they expected him every minute, they stayed about the place in spite o' the family, an' mended everything they could lay their hands on. Bat an' Mr. Hycy met that night in Teddy Phat's still-house, in Glendearg, an' went home together across the mountains afterward."

"Well, Mr. Burke, what have you to say to this?" asked Chevydale.

"Why," replied Hycy, "that it's a very respectable conspiracy as it stands, supported by the thief and vagabond, and the beggar's brat."

"Was there any investigation at the time of its occurrence?" asked Vanston.

"There was, your honor," replied Nanny; "it was proved clearly enough that Phil and Ned Hogan were both dead drunk that night an' couldn't commit a robbery; an' Masther Hycy himself said that he knew how Bat spent the night, an' that of course *he* couldn't do it; an' you know, your honors, there was no gettin' over that. I have, or rather my father has, Bat Hogan's shoes still."

"This, I repeat, seems a very serious charge, Mr. Burke," said Chevydale again.

"Which, as I said before, contains not one particle of truth," replied Hycy. "If I had resolved to break open my father's chest to get cash out of it, it is not likely that I would call in the aid of such a man as Bat Hogan. As a proof that I had nothing to do with the robbery in question, I can satisfy you that my mother, not many days after the occurrence of it, was obliged to get her car and drive some three or four miles' distance to borrow a hundred pounds for me from a friend of hers, upon her own responsibility, which. had I committed the outrage in question, I would not have required at all."

Old Burke's face would, at this period of the proceedings, have extorted compassion from any heart. Sorrow, distress, agony of spirit, and shame, were all so legible in his pale features—that those who were present kept their eyes averted, from respect to the man, and from sympathy with his sufferings.

At length he himself came forward, and, after wiping away a few bitter tears from his cheeks, he said—"Gentlemen, I care little about the money I lost, nor about who took it—let it go—as for me, I won't miss it; but there is one thing that cuts me to the heart—I'm spakin' about the misfortune that was brought, or near bein' brought, upon this honest an' generous-hearted young man, Bryan M'Mahon, through manes of a black plot that was got up against him—I'm spakin' of the Still that was found on his farm of Ahadarra. *That*, if my son had act or part in it, is a thousand times worse than the other; as for the takin' of the money, I don't care about it, as I said—nor *I* won't prosecute any one for it; but I must have my mind satisfied about the other affair."

It is not our intention to dwell at any length upon the clear proofs of his treachery and deceit, which were established against him by Harry Clinton, who produced the anonymous letter to his uncle — brought home to him as it was by his own evidence and that of Nanny Peety.

"There is, however," said Vanston, "another circumstance affecting the reputation and honesty of Mr. Bryan M'Mahon, which in your presence, Mr. M'Gowan, I am anxious to set at rest. I have already contradicted it with indignation wherever I have heard it, and I am the more anxious to do so now, whilst M'Mahon and Burke are present, and because I have been given to understand that you denounced him —

RYCY RECEIVED THE MONEY, SET SPURS TO HIS HORSE, AND WAS OUT OF SIGHT IN A MOMENT.—*Emigrants of Ahadarra*, p. 635.

M'Mahon — with such hostility, from the altar, as almost occasioned him to be put to death in the house of God."

"You are undher a mistake there, Major Vanston, with great respect," replied the priest. "It wasn't I but my senior curate, Father M'Pepper; and he has already been reprimanded by his Bishop."

"Well," replied the other, "I am glad to hear it. However, I now solemnly declare, as an honest man and an Irish gentleman, that neither I, nor any one for me, with my knowledge, ever gave or sent any money to Bryan M'Mahon; but perhaps we may ascertain who did. M'Mahon, have you got the letter about you?"

"I have, sir," replied Bryan, "and the bank-note, too."

"You will find the frank and address both in your own handwriting," said Hycy. "It was I brought him the letter from the post-office."

"Show me the letter, if you plaise," said Nanny, who, after looking first at it and then at Hycy, added, "and it was I gave it this little tear near the corner, and dhrew three scrapes of a pin across the paper, an' there they are yet; an' now I can take my oath that it was Mr. Hycy that sent that letther to Bryan M'Mahon—an' your Reverence is the very man I showed it to, and that tould me who it was goin' to, in the street of Ballymacan."

On a close inspection of the letter it was clearly obvious that, although there appeared at a cursory glance a strong resemblance between the frank and the address, yet the difference was too plain to be mistaken.

"If there is further evidence necessary," said Vanston, looking at Hycy significantly, "my agent can produce it—and he is now in the house."

"I think you would not venture on that," replied Hycy.

"Don't be too sure of that," said the other, determinedly.

"Sir," replied Father Magowan, "there is nothing further on that point necessary—the proof is plain and clear; and now, Bryan M'Mahon, give me *your* hand, for it is that of an honest man—I am proud to see that you stand pure and unsullied again; and it shall be my duty to see that justice shall be rendered you, and ample compensation made for all that you have suffered."

"Thank you, sir," replied Bryan, with an air of deep dejection, "but I am sorry to say it is now too late—I am done with the country, and with those that misrepresented me, for ever."

Chevydale looked at him with deep attention for a moment, then whispered something to Vanston, who smiled, and nodded his head approvingly.

Jemmy Burke now prepared to go. "Good mornin', gintlemen," he said, "I am glad to see the honest name cleared and set right, as it ought to be; but as for myself, I lave you wid a heavy—wid a breakin' heart."

As he disappeared at the door, Hycy rushed after him, exclaiming, "Father, listen to me—don't go yet till you hear my defence. I will go and fetch him back, he exclaimed—"he must hear what I have to say for myself."

He overtook his father at the bottom of the hall steps. "Give me a hundred pounds," said he, "and you will never see my face again."

"There is two hundre'," said his father; "I expected this. Your mother confessed all to me this mornin', bekaise she knew it would come out here, I suppose. Go now, for undher my roof you'll never come again. If you can—reform your life—an' live at all events, as if there was a God above you.

Before you go answer me;—what made you bring in Bat Hogan to rob me?"

"Simply," replied his son, "because I wished to make him and them feel that I had them in my power—and now you have it."

Hycy received the money, set spurs to his horse, and was out of sight in a moment—"Ah!" exclaimed the old man, with bitterness of soul, "what mightn't he be if his weak and foolish mother hadn't taken it into her head to make a gentleman of him! But now she reaps as she sowed. She's punished—an' that's enough."—And thus does Hycy the accomplished make his exit from our humble stage.

"Gintlemen," said Finigan, "now that the accomplished Mr. Hycy is disposed of, I beg to state, that it will be productive of much public good to the country to expatriate these three virtuous worthies, *qui nomine gaudent* Hogan—and the more so as it can be done on clear legal grounds. They are a principal means of driving this respectable young man, Bryan M'Mahon, and his father's family, out of the land of their birth; and there will be something extremely appropriate—and indicative besides of condign and retributive punishment—in sending them on their travels at his Majesty's expense. I am here, in connection with others, to furnish you with the necessary proof against them; and I am of opinion that the sooner they are sent upon a voyage of discovery it will be so much the better for the rejoicing neighborhood they will leave behind them."

The hint was immediately taken with respect to them and Vincent, all of whom had

been engaged in coining under Hycy's auspices—they were apprehended and imprisoned, the chief evidence against them being Teddy Phats, Peety Dhu, and Finigan, who for once became a stag, as he called it. They were indicted for a capital felony; but the prosecution having been postponed for want of sufficient evidence, they were kept in durance until next assizes;—having found it impossible to procure bail. In the meantime new charges of uttering base coin came thick and strong against them; and as the Crown lawyers found that they could not succeed on the capital indictment—nor indeed did they wish to do so—they tried them on the lighter one, and succeeded in getting sentence of transportation passed against every one of them, with the exception of Kate Hogan alone.—So that, as Finigan afterwards said, instead of Bryan M'Mahon, it was they themselves that became "the Emigrants of Ahadarra," at the king's expense—and Mr. Hycy at his own."

CHAPTER XXVII.

Conclusion.

How Kathleen Cavanagh spent the time that elapsed between the period at which she last appeared to our readers and the present may be easily gathered from what we are about to write. We have said already that her father, upon the strength of some expressions uttered in a spirit of distraction and agony, assured Jemmy Burke that she had consented to marry his son Edward, after a given period. Honest Jemmy, however, never for a moment suspected the nature of the basis upon which his worthy neighbor had erected the superstructure of his narrative; but at the same time he felt sadly puzzled by the melancholy and declining appearance of her whom he looked upon as his future daughter-in-law. The truth was that scarcely any of her acquaintances could recognize her as the same majestic, tall, and beautiful girl whom they had known before this heavy disappointment had come on her. Her exquisite figure had lost most of its roundness, her eye no longer flashed with its dark mellow lustre, and her cheek—her damask cheek—distress and despair had fed upon it, until little remained there but the hue of death itself. Her health in fact was evidently beginning to go. Her appetite had abandoned her; she slept little, and that little was restless and unrefreshing. All her family, with the exception of her father and mother, who sustained themselves with the silly ambition of their daughter being able to keep her jaunting-car—for her father had made that point *a sine qua non*—all, we say, with the above exceptions, became seriously alarmed at the state of her mind and health.

"Kathleen, dear," said her affectionate sister, "I think you have carried your feelings against Bryan far enough."

"My feelings against Bryan!" she exclamed.

"Yes," proceeded her sister, "I think you ought to forgive him."

"Ah, Hanna darling, how little you know of your sister's heart. I have long since forgiven him, Hanna."

"Then what's to prevent you from making up with him?"

"I have long since forgiven him, Hanna; but, my dear sister, I never can nor will think for a moment of marrying any man that has failed, when brought to the trial, in honest and steadfast principal—the man that would call me wife should be upright, pure, and free from every stain of corruption—he must have no disgrace or dishonor upon his name, and he must feel the love of his religion and his country as the great ruling principles of his life. I have long since forgiven Bryan, but it is because he is not what I hoped he was, and what I wished him to be, that I am as you see me."

"Then you do intend to marry?" asked Hanna, with a smile.

"Why do you ask that, Hanna?"

"Why, because you've given me sich a fine description of the kind o' man your husband *is to be*."

"Hanna," she replied, solemnly, "look at my cheek, look at my eye, look at my whole figure, and then ask me that question again if you can. Don't you see, darling, that death is upon me? I feel it."

Her loving and beloved sister threw her arms around her neck, and burst into an irrepressible fit of bitter grief.

"Oh, you are changed, most woefully, Kathleen, darlin'," she exclaimed, kissing her tenderly; "but if you could only bear up now, time would set everything right, and bring you about right, as it will still, I hope."

Her sister mused for some time, and then added—"I think I could bear up yet if he was to stay in the country; but when I recollect that he's going to another land—for ever—I feel that my heart is broken: as it is, his disgrace and that thought are both killin' me. To-morrow the auction comes on, and then he goes—after that I will never see him. I'm afraid, Hanna, that I'll have to go to bed; I feel that I'm hardly able to sit up."

Hanna once more pressed her to her heart and wept.

"Don't cry, Hanna dear—don't cry for me; the bitterest part of my fate will be partin' from you."

Hanna here pressed her again and wept aloud, whilst her spotless and great-minded sister consoled her as well as she could. "Oh, what would become of me!" exclaimed Hanna, sobbing; "if anything was to happen you, or take you away from me, it would break my heart, too, and I'd die."

"Hanna," said her sister, not encouraging her to proceed any further on that distressing subject; "on to-mbirrow, the time I allowed for Bryan to clear himself, if he could, will be up, and I have only to beg that you'll do all you can to prevent my father and mother from distressing me about Edward Burke; *I* will never marry him, but I expect to see him your husband yet, and I think he's worthy of you—that's saying a great deal, I know. You love him, Hanna—I know it, and he loves you, Hanna, for he told me so the last day but one he was here;—you remember they all went out, and left us together, and then he told me all.

Hanna's face and neck became crimson, and she was about to reply, when a rather loud but good-humored voice was heard in the kitchen, for this dialogue took place in the parlor—exclaiming, "God save all here! How do you do, Mrs. Cavanagh? How is Gerald and the youngsters?"

"Indeed all middlin' well, thank your reverence, barrin' our eldest girl that's a little low spirited for some time past."

"Ay, ay, I know the cause of that—it's no secret—where is she now? If she's in the house let me see her."

The two sisters having composed their dress a little and their features, immediately made their appearance.

"God be good to us!" he exclaimed, "here's a change! Why, may I never sin, if I'd know her no more than the mother that bore her. Lord guard us! look at this! Do you give her nothing, Mrs. Cavanagh?"

"Nothing on airth," she replied; "her complaint's upon the spirits, an' we didn't think that physic stuff would be of any use to her."

"Well, perhaps I will find a cure for her. "Listen to me, darling. Your sweetheart's name and fame are cleared, and Bryan M'Mahon is what he ever was—an honest an' upright young man."

Kathleen started, looked around her, as if with amazement, and without seeming to know exactly what she did, went towards the door, and was about to walk out, when Hanna, detaining her, asked with alarm—"Kathleen, what ails you, dear? Where are you going?"

"Going," she replied; "I was going to—where?—why?—what—what has happened?"

"The news came upon her too much by surprise," said Hanna, looking towards the priest.

"Kathleen, darlin'," exclaimed her mother, "try and compose yourself. Lord guard us, what can ail her?"

"Let her come with me into the parlor, mother, an' do you an' Father Magowan stay where you are."

They accordingly went in, and after about the space of ten minutes she recovered herself so far as to make Hanna repeat the intelligence which the simple-hearted priest had, with so little preparation, communicated. Having listened to it earnestly, she laid her head upon Hanna's bosom and indulged in a long fit of quiet and joyful grief. When she had recovered a little, Father Magowan entered at more length into the circumstances connected with the changes that had affected her lover's character so deeply, after which he wound up by giving expression to the following determination—a determination, by the way, which we earnestly recommend to all politicians of his profession.

"As for my part," said he, "it has opened my eyes to one thing that I won't forget:—a single word of politics I shall never suffer to be preached from the altar while I live; neither shall I allow denouncements for political offences. The altar, as the bishop told me—and a hard rap he gave Mr. M'Pepper across the knuckles for Bryan's affair—'the altar,' said he, 'isn't the place for politics, but for religion; an' I hope I may never hear of its being desecrated with politics again,' said his lordship, an' neither I will, I assure you."

The intelligence of the unexpected change that had taken place in favor of the M'Mahon's, did not reach them on that day, which was the same, as we have stated, on which their grandfather departed this life. The relief felt by Thomas M'Mahon and his family at this old man's death, took nothing from the sorrow which weighed them down so heavily in consequence of their separation from the abode of their forefathers and the place of their birth. They knew, or at least they took it for granted that their grandfather would never have borne the long voyage across the Atlantic, a circumstance which distressed them very much. His death, however, exhibiting, as it did, the undying attachment to home which nothing else could extinguish, only kindled the same affection more strongly and tenderly in their hearts. The account of it had gone abroad through the neighborhood, and with it the intelligence that the auction would be postponed until

that day week. And now that he was gone, all their hearts turned with sorrow and sympathy to the deep and almost agonizing struggles which their coming departure caused their father to contend with. Bryan whose calm but manly firmness sustained them all, absolutely feared that his courage would fail him, or that his very health would break down. He also felt for his heroic little sister, Dora, who, although too resolute to complain or urge her own sufferings, did not endure the less on that account.

"My dear Dora," said he, after their grandfather had been laid out, "I know what you are suffering, but what can I do? This split between the Cavanaghs and us has put it out of my power to serve you as I had intended. It was my wish to see you and James Cavanagh married; but God knows I pity you from my heart; for, my dear Dora, there's no use in denyin' it, I understand too well what you feel."

"Don't fret for me, Bryan," she replied; "I'm willin' to bear my share of the affliction that has come upon the family, rather than do anything mane or unworthy. I know it goes hard with me to give up James and lave him for ever; but then I see that it must be done, and that I must submit to it. May God strengthen and enable me! and that's my earnest prayer. I also often prayed that you an' Kathleen might be reconciled; but I wasn't heard, it seems. I sometimes think that you ought to go to her; but then on second thoughts I can hardly advise you to do so."

"No, Dora, I never will, dear; she ought to have heard me as you said face to face; instead o' that she condemned me without a hearin'. An' yet, Dora," he added, "little she knows—little she drames, what I'm sufferin' on her account, and how I love her—more now than ever, I think; she's so changed, they say, that you could scarcely know her." As he spoke, a single tear fell upon Dora's hand which he held in his.

"Come, Bryan," she said, assuming a cheerfulness which she did not feel, "don't have it to say that little Dora, who ought and does look up to you for support, must begin to support you herself; to-morrow's the last day—who knows but she may relent yet?" Bryan smiled faintly, then patted her head, and said, "darling little Dora, the wealth of nations couldn't purchase you."

"Not to do anything mane or wrong, at any rate," she replied; after which she went in to attend to the affairs of the family, for this conversation took place in the garden.

As evening approached, a deep gloom, the consequence of strong inward suffering, overspread the features and bearing of Thomas M'Mahon. For some time past, he had almost given himself over to the influence of what he experienced—a fact that was observable in many ways, all more or less tending to revive the affection which he felt for his departed wife. For instance, ever since their minds had been made up to emigrate, he had watched, and tended, and fed *Bracky*, her favorite cow, with his own hands; nor would he suffer any one else in the family to go near her, with the exception of Dora, by whom she had been milked ever since her mother's death, and to whom the poor animal had now transferred her affection. He also cleaned and oiled her spinning-wheel, examined her clothes, and kept himself perpetually engaged in looking at every object that was calculated to bring her once more before his imagination.

About a couple of hours before sunset, without saying where he was going, he sauntered down to the graveyard of *Carndhu* where she lay, and having first uncovered his head and offered up a prayer for the repose of her soul, he wept bitterly.

"Bridget," said he, in that strong figurative language so frequently used by the Irish, when under the influence of deep emotion; "Bridget, wife of my heart, you are removed from the thrials and throubles of this world—from the thrials and throubles that have come upon us. I'm come, now—your own husband—him that loved *you* beyant everything on this earth, to tell you why the last wish o' my heart, which was to sleep where I ought to sleep, by your side, can't be granted to me, and to explain to you why it is, in case you'd miss me from my place beside you. This unfortunate counthry, Bridget, has changed, an' is changin' fast for the worse. The landlord hasn't proved himself to be towards us what he ought to be, and what we expected he would; an' so, rather than remain at the terms he axes from us, it's better for us to thry our fortune in America; bekaise, if we stay here, we must only come to poverty an' destitution, an' sorrow; an' you know how it 'ud break my heart to see our childre' brought to that, in the very place where they wor always respected. They're all good to me, as they ever wor to us both, acushla machree; but poor Bryan, that you loved so much—your favorite and your pride—has had much to suffer, darlin', since you left us; but blessed be God, he bears it manfully and patiently, although I can see by the sorrow on my boy's brow that the heart widin him is breakin'. He's not, afther all, to be married, as you hoped and wished he would, to Kathleen Cavanagh. Her mind has been poisoned against him; but little she knows him, or she'd not turn

from him as she did. An' now, Bridget, asthore machree, is it come to this wid me? I must lave you for ever. I must lave—as my father said, that went this day to heaven as you know, now—I must lave, as he said, the ould places. I must go to a strange country, and sleep among a strange people; but it's for the sake of our childre' I do so, lavin' you alone there where you're sleepin'? I wouldn't lave you if I could help it; but we'll meet yet in heaven, my blessed wife, where there won't be distress, or injustice, or sorrow to part us. Achora machree, I'm come, then, to take my last farewell of you. Farewell, then, my darlin' wife, till we meet for evermore in heaven!"

He departed from the grave slowly, and returned in deep sorrow to his own house.

About twelve o'clock the next morning, the family and those neighbors who were assembled as usual at the wake-house, from respect to the dead, were a good deal surprised by the appearance of Mr. Vanston and their landlord, both of whom entered the house.

"Gentlemen, you're welcome," said old M'Mahon; "but I'm sorry to say that it's to a house of grief and throuble I must welcome you—death's here, gentlemen, and more than death; but God's will be done, we must be obaidient."

"M'Mahon," said Chevydale, "give me your hand. I am sorry that either you or your son have suffered anything on my account. I am come now to render you an act of justice—to compensate both you and him, as far as I can, for the anxiety you have endured. Consider yourselves both, therefore, as restored to your farms at the terms you proposed originally. I shall have leases prepared—give up the notion of emigration—the country cannot spare such men as you and your admirable son. I shall have leases I say prepared, and you will be under no necessity of leaving either Carriglass or Ahadarra."

Need we describe the effect which such a communication had upon this sterling-hearted family? Need we assure our readers that the weight was removed from all their hearts, and the cloud from every brow? Is it necessary to add that Bryan M'Mahon and his high-minded Kathleen were married? that Dora and James followed their example, and that Edward Burke, in due time, bestowed his hand upon sweet and affectionate Hanna Cavanagh?

We have little now to add. Young Clinton, in the course of a few months, became agent to Chevydale, whose property soon gave proofs that kindness, good judgment, and upright principle were best calculated not only to improve it, but to place a landlord and his tenantry on that footing of mutual good-will and reciprocal interest upon which they should ever stand towards each other.

We need scarcely say that the sympathy felt for honest Jemmy Burke, in consequence of the disgraceful conduct of his son, was deep and general. He himself did not recover it for a long period, and it was observed that, in future, not one of his friends ever uttered Hycy's name in his presence.

With respect to that young gentleman's fate and that of Teddy Phats, we have to record a rather remarkable coincidence. In about three years after his escape, his father received an account of his death from Montreal, where it appears he expired under circumstances of great wretchedness and destitution, after having led, during his residence there, a most profligate and disgraceful life. Early the same day on which the intelligence of his death reached his family, they also received an account through the M'Mahons to the effect that Teddy Phats had, on the preceding night, fallen from one of the cliffs of Althadawan and broken his neck; a fate which occasioned neither surprise nor sorrow.

We have only to add that Bryan M'Mahon and his wife took Nanny Peety into their service; and that Kate Hogan and Mr. O'Finigan had always a comfortable seat at their hospitable hearth; and the latter a warm glass of punch occasionally, for the purpose, as he said himself, of keeping him properly sober.